the eternal stranger

by Ben Kaplan, Ph.D.

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THE ETERNAL STRANGER

A STUDY OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE SMALL COMMUNITY

by

Benjamin Kaplan

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DEDICATION

To my friends and students
Mathe and Alex Allain as a
token of affection and gratitude

Preface

In this year of the three hundredth anniversary of the coming of the first Jewish people to America, it is very appropriate that we have a study of a phase of American-Jewish life that has heretofore received little attention. The literature on the Jew in America is relatively abundant. Both his history in general and his history in certain localities, particularly on the east coast, have been reported in various and excellent studies. But the Jew in the small town, the hinterland, and particularly the sociological aspects of his existence, is a subject that requires more attention than it has so far been given. It is this subject that Dr. Kaplan has undertaken to examine, and it is the effect of small town Southern life on three Jewish communities in Louisiana that forms the core around which he builds his study.

The urban Jew has often been faced with prejudices, but he has had the comfort and support of large numbers of his fellows. The Jew in the older eastern and mid-western communities was strengthened by well-established synagogues, and by a local family and community heritage that goes back several generations. But the Jew in the small-town South, outside of the older coastal cities, was usually one of a small community, held together by family, and often tenuous, religious ties. Faced with the problem of survival in an overwhelming non-Jewish community, the process of assimilation has been inevitable – first economic then social, and eventually religious. In fact, as Dr. Kaplan so ably points out, the survival strength of the small-town Jewish community has been in almost direct ratio to the

strength of the local synagogue. But although assimilation has taken place, it has been a rather slow process, taking a generation or two rather than a few years. In most cases, the Jew of the older generation, the original immigrant – and sometimes even his son and grandson – has remained as far as the surrounding Christian world is concerned "the eternal stranger."

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Purpose and Background of Study

The purpose of this book is to bring into focus a great number and wide variety of data concerning the Jewish community and the activities of the members of such a community in relation to one another and in relation to the general phenomenon of the larger society. Included in this study is an analysis of the history and the character of Jewish communal life and the changes occurring in Jewish communal life. In brief, this undertaking approximates a socio-psychological study of the nature of the "togetherness" of Jewish people in three selected communities.

It seems necessary and important to undertake this study inasmuch as it appears that today Judaism and the Jewish community are probably the least understood of all religions and religious groups. While it is true that much research and writing have been done in regard to the Jewish situation, in general little of it has been directed within the framework of sociology.[1] It is well known to the student of this subject that the literature on the Jews is abundant; however, an appraisal of this material indicates that there has been, until recently, very little attempt to give an objective portrayal of Jewish life, Jewish culture, or Jewish communal group activities. Most material dealing with this subject appears to be efforts toward bolstering some particularistic theory or providing rationalization for some plan for reform.[2] At best this writing has been apologetic in nature. Such

patriotism, however devoted and well informed, does not exclude but rather impels a clear recognition and searching analysis of the situation.

An attempt is herewith made to present as objectively as possible and within the scope and limitations of this undertaking the various aspects of the human association called the Jewish community. It is hoped that this study will contribute some sociologically relevant facts not only to the field in general but also to the "Science of Judaism" which Dr. Marcus defines as "the quest for an exact and substantial knowledge of Judaism and of the relation of the Jews with all peoples and cultures with which he has come in contact."[3]

Thus it is that this project attempts to survey a unique community, unique for many reasons but particularly because it consists of individuals who have been for two thousand years a minority group.[4] The minority group here considered numbers five million in the United States, scattered in every part of the land from villages to metropolitan centers.

These individuals have recently come to the realization that although living in the United States has brought them freedom, rights, and blessings beyond the hopes and dreams of their forefathers, it has also resulted in widespread assimilation to every phase of the general culture with the consequence that it has brought about a considerable disintegration of Jewry, a dissolving of the bonds of faith and a departure from the customs, ideals, and traditions of Jewish life. This process of assimilation has progressed from principle to principle without too serious concern to most Jews until it received a shock like that which awakened the ancient Hebrew nation to full self-consciousness in the Maccabean period. The revival of brutal anti-Semitism in Western Europe and of social anti-Semitism in several other areas reminded the Jews, in many cases against their will, that whatever their assimilation, other people still regarded them as strangers. However, most Jews still believe that the Jewish outlook remains something sublime, distinctive, and worth preserving. Be that as it may, they are finding today that they are no longer members of any corporate society in which they may find strength, inspiration, and sanctity. Most of these Jews

would like to continue to live as Jews in this country, to perpetuate and develop their religious traditions, culture, and general communal life. However, these same individuals are well aware that the present Diaspora scene warrants little optimism for a mass return to Judaism on the part of the growing number of apathetic, indifferent, and alienated Jews.[5] Despite the fact that for many generations sociological, political, and psychological forces seemed to converge toward the extinction of Judaism and the Jewish community,[6] they have remained, until recently, going concerns. There is a great divergence of opinion among students of this problem, and especially among Jews themselves, as to the reasons for the survival of Judaism in the past and as to the reasons for its present condition which suggests real signs of disintegration. The consensus seems to be, however, that the answer to both questions is to be found in the nature of Jewish communal life. Many Jews of America are particularly concerned with the question regarding the place of the Jewish group in this country. They wonder whether they can survive as a distinct group or whether they must fuse entirely with the total group. If they can survive they are debating which formula of survival is most compatible with the democratic principles of the United States and with the historic identity of the Jewish people. If they can retain their identity, they are asking under what limitations and through what agencies they may do so in order that the Jewish community may be reconstructed successfully in the light of: (1) the demands of the American way of life, (2) a modern changing civilization, (3) a changing conception in religion and (4) a world beset with physical as well as moral and spiritual insecurity. It may well be said that the future of the Jews, just as in the case of the future of all human society in general, depends upon the individual Jew's understanding of the dynamic forces and factors which both motivate and control his own behavior. Such understanding must be achieved not only for individual conduct but also for the relationship between the Jewish group and society at large.

Method, Scope, and Limitations of the Study

It has been wisely said that the Jew himself does not exist — he is "becoming," and it appears that the most ideal situation in which to observe him in this process would be in his communal life. This study plans a systematic treatment of Jewish life by studying its history, people, culture, conflicts, interrelationships, status and motivations in three small Louisiana communities. Particular emphasis is placed on the analysis of the changes which have and are today occurring in these communities in an attempt to examine and evaluate the nature of those forces which have, on the one hand, been responsible for the integration of those communities and, on the other hand, been responsible for their disintegration. While these particular communities may be regarded as mere local incidents, one cannot quite escape the feeling that they may be parts of an endless series of incidents. If one is to accept the truism that in Jewish history students have a faithful mirror which reflects the features of Jewry, then interaction portrayed in the Jewish community studies must be related to the total scene of Jewish life. Therefore, while it may be said that the study and analysis of three small Jewish communities may appear overly simple, it is, nevertheless, not too simple for the present purpose, which is to bring into focus, as much as possible, distinctive elements which may be responsible for Jewish community changes.

The three communities which have been chosen for study are Clinton, Louisiana, where there was at the turn of the century a substantial Jewish group (as small town Jewish communities go) which completely disappeared by 1910; Opelousas, Louisiana, wherein it appears that the Jewish community is today in the process of disintegration and extinction; and New Iberia, Louisiana, where may be found what appears to be a well-integrated, well-established and growing Jewish community.

The material presented in this survey is based on interviews, case histories, life histories, demographical analyses, and participant observation. Actually this project is the result of many years of study, reflection, observation, and experience in Jewish life. The writer has himself been an intimate part of the various

types of Jewish community life from the ghetto-like community of eastern Europe to the practically assimilated community of Lafayette, Louisiana. He has resided in New Iberia and taught some of the Jewish children of Opelousas their Sunday school lessons. As a member of the New Iberia congregation and an intimate friend of many of the Jews in Opelousas, he has been in an excellent position to participate in the Jewish communal activities, as well as to observe the Jewish groups in the framework of the larger communities. He has known personally most of the Jewish families both in New Iberia and Opelousas. It is, of course, well known that such relationships and such close participation in community life can prove to be a two-edged sword in the process of social research. Subjective factors inevitably intrude and the community survey tends to be particularly vulnerable in this regard.

The comments of individuals within the Jewish groups, as well as those in the general communities, proved to be an important source of information. It is important to note that in most cases these individuals were well aware of the use to which their statements were to be put. Another valuable source of information has been the observations made by leaders, both Jewish and non-Jewish, lay and religious. Personal life histories played an important role in helping the writer isolate and evaluate the changes which have occurred in these communities and the elements responsible for them. The subjectivity of these documents are recognized, but it is as value-judgments that they become sociologically meaningful in this study.

Many records and documents pertaining to Jewish communal life were examined while making this survey. Some of these were minute books of congregational meetings, membership lists of synagogues and other groups, cemeteries, newspapers, periodicals, and official records.

This thesis fulfills its objectives to the extent that it portrays and analyzes the structure of three selected Jewish communities in an effort to determine the sociological and psychological bases for these communities, the nature of their institutions, behavior, attitudes, interrelationships; their state of integration or disintegration — in short, the character of their togetherness.

NOTES

1. Howard W. Odum, "Toward the Dynamic Study of Jewish Culture," *Social Forces*, XXIX (1951), p. 450.

2. Nathan Glazer in discussing "What Sociology Knows About American Jews," *Commentary* (March 1950), p. 275, points out that the sociology of Jews has been animated, and undoubtedly colored by specific preoccupations and political moods, whether of alarm, apprehension, or satisfaction.

3. Jacob R. Marcus, *The Rise and Destiny of the German Jew* (Cincinnati: Department of Synagogue and School Extension, 1934), p. 227.

4. A. Schermerhorn, *These Our People*, (Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1949), p. 5, gives the following definition of a minority group; "Minorities are sub-groups within a culture which are distinguishable from the dominant group by reason of differences in physiognomy, language, customs, or culture patterns (including any combination of these factors). Such subgroups are regarded as inherently different and 'not belonging' to the dominant group; for this reason they are consciously or unconsciously excluded from full participation in the life of the culture. Usually the exclusion is at least partly based on historical reasons which differentiates the background of the sub-group from that of the dominant group."

5. Trude (Weiss) Rosmarin, *Jewish Survival* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949), p. 18.

6. Carl M. Rosenquist and S. Thomas Friedman, "Jewish Population Trends in the United States," *Social Research*, XVIII (1951), p. 218, in discussing the study made of the Jewish population in Germany from 1910 to 1939 by Erich Rosenthal state that Rosenthal's conclusion was that the Jews of Germany were on the way to extinction long before the beginning of the Hitler regime. It is interesting to note that a member of the congregation in Lafayette, Louisiana, who migrated from Germany as a refugee in 1937, concurred with Rosenthal's conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

History of the Jews in the United States

Werner Sombart,[1] the German scholar, makes a most pertinent observation regarding the part played by Jews in the history of America. "That the Jews have taken a prominent share in American life in the present and in the past may be conceded; perhaps a more prominent share than would at first sight appear," he states in his discussion of the foundation of the American colonies. He points out further that it was due to the manifold trade activities of the Jews that the colonies were able to maintain their existence and that it was "that Jewish influence which made the United States just what they are – that is, American."[2]

Another point of view regarding the nature of the contribution made by the early Jews to America, which was held by many Christians in the early part of the nineteenth century and set down by John Adams is as follows:

"They (the Jews) are the most glorious nation that ever inhabited this earth. The Romans and their Empire were but a bauble in comparison of the Jews. They have given religion to three-quarters of the globe and have influenced the affairs of mankind more and more happily than any other nation ancient or modern."[3]

The exact extent that Jews may have influenced the growth and development of the United States cannot, of course, be measured, nor is it possible to portray what they may have specifically contributed to the American culture. However, even

a brief history of the Jews in America can reflect not only Jewish personalities and Jewish activities but also their cultural environment, the development of Jewish communal life and perhaps a glimpse of the destiny of these same Jews.

American Jewish history begins with the Exodus of 1492.[4] In March of that year there occurred a major catastrophe in the lives of the Jews of Spain. It was known as the Edict of Expulsion. Within a few months the Jews of Spain were ordered to liquidate their affairs and to dispose of their possessions. On August 3 of that year the ships of the exiles began their historic voyage which was ultimately to lead many of their descendants to the newly discovered land.

It may well be said that the history of the Jews in America is essentially the history of three distinct tides of migration.[5] Soon after the new world was opened to European adventurers the Sephardic group came, some directly from Spain and Portugal, others by way of Holland and still others by way of South American settlements. The first group was very small and for about three hundred years the Jewish element in America remained negligible. At the turn of the nineteenth century a large and steady German group began migrating to this country and increased perceptibly after the reaction to the post-Waterloo era and the failure of the liberal revolution of 1848. In 1860 began the great movement of the Polish, Russian and Roumanian group. These Slavic immigrants, who numbered more than two and one-half million by 1914, completely submerged the other group and deeply influenced American Jewish life.[6]

Jews in the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods

In 1621 Elias Legardo, America's first known Jew, came to Virginia on the *Abigail*.[7] Soon other settlers with Jewish names began to appear on the records of the old Dominion. In 1624 a woman named Rebecca Isaacke was a resident of Virginia.

In 1654 a group of twenty-three refugees from Pernambuco arrived on the *St. Catarina* and settled in New Amsterdam.[8] Peter Stuyvesant, the Governor of the colony, was at first reluctant to give the group permission to land. Later he was

ordered to do so by the Dutch East India Company, several of whose important stockholders were Jews.[9]

The exact date of the arrival of Jews in Newport is uncertain. A study of the history of the Masonic organization indicates that "in the spring of 1658, Mordecai Campannall, Moses Peckeko, Levi and others; in all fifteen families arrived at Newport from Holland. They brought with them the three first degrees of Masonry, and worked them in the house of Campannall, and continued to do so, they and their successors to the year 1742."[10]

The Jews of Newport organized a religious community, Kabal Kadosh, and selected Mordecai Campannall as its first head. The first services were conducted in his home. By February 1677 this Jewish communal group had purchased its first cemetery plot.[11]

The first Jewish resident of Boston was named Sallomon. The reason that his name happens to be recorded in history was due entirely to a bit of poor judgment on his part. Sallomon had the audacity to be traveling on a Sunday in the year 1688. This was a serious offense in a day when men were sentenced to a month in prison if they missed church on Sunday. Sallomon's journey did not pass unnoticed and he was brought before the Court in Epswich. The record of that event describes Sallomon as a "Mulata Jue." Thus it is that as far as it is known the first Jew living in Massachusetts was of Negro descent.[12]

The will of one Abraham Isack of New York was recorded in Charles Town, South Carolina in 1710 – the oldest Jewish will on record in South Carolina.[13] The name of Joseph Tobias (died 1761) is named on the list of those who paid "quit-rent" in 1739 and who had been granted a "Jew Certificate" of naturalization in 1741 in Charles Town.[14] In 1762, David Olivera appeared before a Justice of the Peace and swore on the Pentateuch that he saw Joseph Tobias make his sister, Reina De Lyon, the gift of a slave by deed.[15] Although the Jews of South Carolina did not have the right to vote or to hold office as the result of the election laws of 1721, they had many other important rights. The Jews of that community were allowed to live openly as Jews and, in fact, to have a house of worship,

this in spite of the fact that by law unrestricted freedom to worship was the right of Protestants only. The Jewish synagogue was established in 1750. Other rights which the Jews of Charles Town had were the rights to become naturalized, the right to own property (including land and slaves), to leave their property by will, and the right to appear as witnesses by taking oath on the Pentateuch.[16]

In 1744 in the "Journal of Treaty With Six Nations," drawn up at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, mention is made of Jews recently arrived from New York. In 1747 two Jews named Simon and Henriques acquired the deed, as trustees, to the Jewish Cemetery at Lancaster. Joseph Simon was in this group. He and another coreligionist were the first two Jews to be naturalized in Lancaster. This was in 1749. Among Simon's business associates were Barnard and Michael Gratz, David Franks, Levy Andrew Levy, and Solomon Etting.[17]

The eighteenth century found many Jews throughout the colony of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia was the center of their activities and there were to be found many prosperous Jewish merchants who lead lives of ease and refinement. A generation of native American Jews had grown up in New York, in Newport, and in Philadelphia. Their children were often sent abroad or tutored by special teachers in their homes.[18]

However, not all the Jews of that day were rich nor were they all successful merchants and landholders. An analysis of the occupational diversity proves their versatility as well as their differences in income. There were among the Jews of that era chandlers, perukemakers, butchers, watchmakers, and vendue masters. On the eve of the American revolution, Jews ranged from mendicants to merchant princes, from unskilled laborers to physicians, from peddlers to shipowners.[19]

The last seaboard colony to be settled was Georgia. In 1732 twelve families of German Jews arrived there. James Oglethorpe, who headed the colony, made them welcome. There they bought land and introduced viniculture and helped develop the silk industry. One Dr. Nunez, a Jew, earned the gratitude of the settlers by his unselfish devotion to the sick of the new colony.[20]

The great majority of Jews felt that the Revolutionary War was in a sense their own. They contributed heavily to it in men and material. They fought as soldiers in the ranks and as officers. The financial contribution to the American cause by Haym Salomon is a well-known fact.

The Revolution and the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights had special meaning for the Jews of that day; they all implied a new social outlook for those who were searching for religious and political freedom. Jews were particularly vocal in their insistence on equality. Wherever disqualifying laws operated they worked in behalf of their removal. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites, organized officially in 1859 was from the first an agency alert to every infraction of rights of Jews, an avowed advocate of equality, and an eager guardian for maintaining the position and status of Jews in America and abroad.[21]

The Period of German Migration

Estimates of the number of Jews in America have always been haphazard. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was estimated that approximately three thousand Jews were in the United States. By 1847 it was estimated that the number of Jews in the United States had grown to fifty thousand. Up to that point there was no hard and fast distinction among the Jews on the basis of origin. That particular distinction began to manifest itself only after the mass migration to America on the part of the east European Jews. If any distinction at all could be drawn at that time it was drawn between native American Jews and those of foreign birth. In the middle of the nineteenth century there did exist a psychological difference, very subtle perhaps, in the ideas and attitudes of the native Jew which separated him from the ideologies of the transplanted Jew. Oftentimes and with some justification from their point of view, newly arrived religious leaders called attention to the fact that in their religious observance the native Jews in each area partook of the color of the Christian ideology which was geographically nearest them. As one outstanding Jewish leader

observed it: "there were Episcopalian Jews in New York, Quaker Jews in Philadelphia, and Huguenot Jews in Charleston." About this time, too, a definite rift was beginning to make itself felt between the defenders of Orthodoxy and the newly formed group, known as Reform, which was being accused as deliberately seeking to set up in America a new religious system which would be acceptable to Gentiles.[22]

The break between the early settlers and the German Jews appeared to be inevitable. The older Jewish settlers found the newcomers from Germany quite different from themselves. Feeling themselves part of the country in language, manners and attitudes and conscious of the fact that complete religious equality had been but recently gained, the Spanish-Portuguese Jews were both inimical and apprehensive. The German immigrants were poor and spoke English with difficulty. They were at the same time very ambitious to establish themselves quickly and thereby gave the impression of being aggressive. The old settlers forgot that their own ancestors, a few generations back, had in all probability been charged with similar faults. On the other hand, the German Jews felt uncomfortable with the Sephardic ritual of the existing synagogue. Had the old settlers accepted them socially, the complaints of the Germans might not have been so serious. The result of these differences was that the German Jews soon seceded completely from the organized congregations of American Jewry and established congregations and communal groups of their own.[23]

Thus came about the first serious breach in the communal and religious unity of the American Jewish population. Once the breach was made it developed at a rapid pace. It finally came to the point that every group which came over from a different town or province of Europe started its own congregation. With every passing year, therefore, the number of congregations in the larger cities multiplied.

It is conceivable that the religious breach between the old settlers and the German immigrants was an important contributing factor in the movement of the German Jews to the Southern and Western portions of the United States.[24]

It is worthy of note that the staunch defender of orthodoxy and the leader of its movement in America was Isaac Leeser (1806-1868), who was born in Germany and who received his education and training there. He became a preacher, translator, and journalist in the field of Judaism. It was his conviction that all immigrants should drop their particular national traits and join together as American Jews with an American ritual. He believed that this American ritual should be the Sephardic since he considered it the most distinguished historically. Many leaders of American Jewry agreed with Leeser in the desirability of all his plans with the possible exception of his suggestion regarding the ritual. Very few of Leeser's plans succeeded during his lifetime. It is important to note, however, that there was one follower of Leeser's who through her program contributed much to the Jewish religious training of the future. She was Rebecca Gratz, a member of the then famous Gratz family of Philadelphia. She took as her model for Jewish religious education the type given to the Protestant children on Sundays. She thus established a school for Jewish children which was to meet on Sunday morning. This Sunday School system was decidedly better than no education at all, although it was vastly different from the thorough Jewish education which had characterized Jewish life in the past and which was still dominant in various parts of the world.[25]

Leeser proved to be more a pedagogue than a preacher and spent much time and effort with grammars and catechism; his translation of the Bible into English remained a standard work until about 1930. His journal, the *Occident,* which he edited for twenty-five years, became the organ for those who believed in the vitality of Orthodox Judaism.[26] The mass immigration which was soon to follow from Russia, Poland, and Roumania was composed almost exclusively of Orthodox Jews who were eager to link themselves with Orthodox religious institutions as soon as they arrived. By 1910 the number of Orthodox synagogues had increased to several thousand, with more than 800 in New York alone. There were, of course, school and cultural organizations in proportion. Most of the rabbis were at first imported from Russia and Poland. It soon became clear, how-

ever, that there was need for education in religious leadership in the United States. To meet this need the Jewish Theological Seminary was established under the leadership of Solomon Schecter.

Opposing Leeser in his scheme of religious philosophy was a young rabbi, Isaac Wise (1819-1900), who had migrated from Bohemia in 1846 and who was the spearhead of the Reform movement in America. The social implications of this dichotomy in Jewish life are most significant and persist to this day.

The Reform movement sought to transplant from Europe to America the cultural phenomena involved in the Enlightenment movement. It had a vigorous, enthusiastic, and scholarly leadership among whom were such outstanding American Jews as Wise, Lilienthal, Adler, Felsenthal, and Hirsch. The leaders of this movement believed that in America orthodoxy would eventually lose Jews to Judaism. The reforms they proposed were designed to shorten the services, to re-interpret some of the outworn beliefs, to lay aside "unmeaning forms as outworn garments."[27]

Isaac M. Wise was the genius of this movement. He denied the central position of Palestine in the future of world Jewry; he substituted America in its place. He rejected talmudic authority at the same time he wished to create a new authority of rabbis.[28] Early in his American career he began an agitation for a union of Reform congregations, and his efforts were rewarded with success in 1873, when the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was organized. He also felt a great need for a seminary to train native-born ministers. On this project he worked twenty-five years, and in 1875 he helped establish the Hebrew Union College. Wise's appeal for an authoritative synod of rabbis to govern religious life in America resulted in the creation of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1889. In addition to his work as a minister and organizer, he did a great deal of writing and as editor of the *Israel,* a weekly journal, he formulated the philosophy of American Reform Judaism.[29]

Whatever their objectives, the two movements divided American Jews into two divergent camps.

The economic activities of the Jewish settlers in the middle and later years of the nineteenth century were manifold. There were the peddlers who began with a few commodities which they could carry on their backs. When they were successful at this they progressed to the horse-and-wagon stage. Then appeared, in small isolated communities, little stores with living quarters in the back. As he began to prosper, the merchant would send for his family and for his friends. Gradually a little Jewish community would evolve, and with it a form of social organization: a place to bury the dead, a place to worship, and a group life to meet social and recreational needs. Mutual assistance or benevolent societies sprang up. These agencies helped to distribute the burden of caring for the indigent and the sick. The group would establish an emergency fund for the use of mendicant Jews.[30]

In addition to the itinerant peddler and the merchant there were artisans and craftsmen. Skilled and unskilled workers were to be found in the larger communities. There were men who bought and sold land and men who tilled the soil. There were Jews who operated barges for the dispatching of merchandise. There were millers and innkeepers. There were brokers and financiers. There were journalists, artists, and musicians. In those years the occupational pattern of the Jews followed largely the pattern of the greater community.[31]

The home life of the Jewish family, on the other hand, was quite different from the home life of the Christian family of the general community. There was an unusual closeness between parents and children to be found not only in the Jewish home but in most immigrant homes. Whatever may have been the sense of strangeness and the feeling of isolation and cultural differences outside of the home, which in the case of Jews particularly constituted the phenomena of "social distance" from their non-Jewish neighbors, these fell away when the individual returned to his own home. The host culture of the greater community had its own customs, holidays, and calendar rhythms, but the little immigrant group of Jews knew another set of calendar observances. The transformation of a poor, insecure, awkward immigrant into a dignified patriarch on Friday evening

and Saturday was a weekly miracle. This morale building practice fortified him for the days of menial work and degrading rounds when both poverty and the lack of linguistic skills often made the immigrant's life a miserable one. Religious services at home and in the synagogue proved a subtle tonic which supported a flagging morale, renewed broken spirits and rebuilt shattered moods.[32]

American Jewish journalism had its birth in 1823 when the publication entitled the *Jew* first appeared. Its purpose was to keep the Jews of America safe from the blandishment of Christian missionaries.[33] It lasted only two years. *Israel's Herald* was the unsuccessful effort of Isidor Bush to transplant the newly developed ideologies of revolutionary Europe to America. The first major weekly of Jewish interest was the *Asmonean,* founded by Robert Lyon. From its inception this journal made every effort to rally American Jews around a common cause and toward common goals and unite them into one cohesive group. In 1843 Leeser founded the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* and served as the editor of this publication for twenty-five years.[34] In 1874 the *Jewish Gazette,* a weekly newspaper in Yiddish, was established, and in 1886 the *Jewish Daily News* came into being. In 1897 came the *Forward* and four years later the *Orthodox Morning Journal. The Day,* a daily, was established in 1914.

A personality worthy of note who spoke for Judaism during this era was Emma Lazarus. She was born in 1849 and died in 1887. In her brief lifetime Emma Lazarus was able to speak both eloquently and beautifully for two Jewish worlds: the European world, which was dying for Jews, and the American world, which was being born for Jews. She, herself, was a native of America yet she felt deeply about the victims of persecution in Russia. "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free" wrote Miss Lazarus in her poem *The New Colossus.*[35] In the *Century Magazine* and in the *American Hebrew* she set forth her new philosophy of a renascent Judaism in America which insisted on the dignity of the individual, on the abolition of every form of discrimination, on absolute equality of all men, and on justice instead of pity. Furthermore, she saw in the rebuilding of Palestine the creation

of a Jewish state for the victims of persecution. She once wrote very prophetically: "I am fully persuaded that all suggested solutions other than this of the Jewish problem are but temporary palliatives."[36]

After Emma Lazarus came such leaders as Nina Morais, Lillian Wald and Henrietta Szold to teach the immigrants, to write back about them, to plead their cause and to do social work among them. However, it is significant to note that the immigrants had brought some of their own leaders along with them. Many of these were not only religious leaders but young men and women of vision and education who had had experience in underground resistance against czarist tyranny and who had cut their teeth on the writings of Karl Marx and who had studied Adam Smith and Ricardo. These people undertook to guide and and indoctrinate their fellow immigrants.[37]

In the meantime the new republic, with sharp internal quarrels over states' rights and slavery, was tending rapidly toward disintegration. In 1861, the divergence between the North and the South passed from discussion into the Civil War. There were no specifically Jewish attitudes in regard to this bitter struggle. The Jews who lived in the South usually defended the states' rights and the institution of slavery. David Yulee (Levy) attained the position of senator from Florida and served with some distinction in the Confederate Congress. Judah P. Benjamin is frequently mentioned in connection with the Confederacy, of which he was successively Attorney-General, Secretary of War, and Secretary of State. Some years previous to the Civil War he had refused a place on the Supreme Court of the United States which had been offered to him by President Pierce. On the other hand, those Jews who lived in the North defended Lincoln's policies and vehemently denounced slavery. It is estimated that perhaps ten thousand Jews served in the armies of both sides, the great majority, of course, with the Federal forces.[38]

Between the Civil War and the new eastern European immigration of the eighties, the Jewish communities in the United States developed a great number of varied philanthropic and educational institutions which became a permanent feature of

American Jewish life. These organizations were planned to aid needy immigrants, to assist the poor, to encourage agricultural settlements, and to stimulate educational and fraternal activities.[39] It is important to point out that these very organizations which began as supplementary agencies to the synagogues later were to become their chief competitors and ultimately were to wean many followers from the synagogues as their central communal institutions.

Nevertheless, the development of the above mentioned agencies was providential since they, in some measure at least, prepared America to receive the tremendous influx of immigrants who soon were to begin crowding into this country.[40]

The Period of Slavic Migration

As early as 1845 migration from Poland had begun. It continued after the failure of the Polish rebellion in 1863. It rose higher when the emancipation of the Russian serfs created an economic crisis in Russia and compelled thousands of Jews to migrate to the United States. The great majority of the new arrivals settled in the larger Eastern cities. The Jewish population of New York alone rose in 1872 to seventy thousand, served by twenty-nine synagogues.[41]

Early in the eighties the violent pogrom epidemics in Russia sent tens of thousands of Jews rushing toward the American shores. Whole communities migrated *en masse,* and more than twenty thousand Jews entered the United States annually. Between 1881 and 1900 it is estimated that about six hundred thousand Russian and Roumanian Jews entered the United States, swelling the total Jewish population to more than a million. In a few years followed more pogroms and political upheavals in Russia, precipitating the migration of nearly a million more Jews to the United States.[42]

By the turn of the century, the two hundred thousand Jews of Sephardic and German origin were completely inundated by nearly two million immigrants from the east European countries. The earlier settlers had come dribbling into the country in small groups and were slowly becoming assimilated by the general

community. The newcomers migrated, not by families, but by whole communities with a well developed group consciousness, desiring to live together and thus forming huge ghettos in the metropolitan areas of the eastern part of the United States.[43]

Despite efforts made by many members of Congress to approve measures which would restrict to some degree this flow of immigrants, immigration remained unrestricted. The newcomers were mostly manual workers in contrast with the old settlers, who earned their livelihood as middlemen. The new immigrants joined the great army of industrial workers, toiling hard for their livelihood as tailors, garment workers, carpenters, painters, tinners, and locksmiths. Life was for them a continuous struggle. They lived, concentrated within a few industrial areas, in congested tenement dwellings. They worked long hours and earned very little; yet the hardships of their lives did not depress them greatly. They had found a freedom in America of which they had only dreamed in their native countries. They found in America endless opportunities to advance economically and politically, to move to more desirable environments, to educate their children, and to participate in civic affairs. Soon many immigrants were able to save enough to become employers, to build small factories, and to become moderately wealthy.[44]

This economic and educational development proved to be significantly influential upon Judaism and Jewish communal life. Many of the alert and ambitious immigrants revolutionized several large industries by their initiative. The clothing industry, for example, very largely in Jewish hands, soon began to undergo a fundamental transformation and shortly became one of the key manufacturing industries in America. Along with the development of such industries came the development of trade unions, and Jewish workers took a prominent part in asserting the claims of labor. These labor unions helped wipe out sweat shops and greatly improved labor conditions.[45] Nearly all of the Jewish labor unions soon became affiliated with the conservative American Federation of Labor, whose leader, it may be noted, was a Jewish cigar maker named Samuel Gompers. He became president of that group in 1881 and, except for one term, was re-elected to that office year after year until his death in 1924.[64]

However, the hundreds of thousands of Jews who were so eager to be a part of the labor union activities soon found themselves becoming radical also in matters pertaining to the Jewish religion. The exigencies of the industrial organization usually compelled them to dispense with the sabbath and holiday observance in general and made inroads in the tradition of the old faith. Many of the workers didn't feel too concerned about this situation and found some freedom in their emancipation from the traditionally dogmatic observances. This situation soon made it evident to religious leaders that the Jewish workingman had become one of their most serious problems.[47]

The first two centuries of American experience were almost wholly free of expressions of hostility to the Jews.[48] This favorable condition developed out of the old Christian conception of the mission of Israel, widely accepted in the early years of the American nation. As late as 1800 there were very few Jews scattered throughout the communities of this country. Their roles as merchants and landowners and their relatively high economic and social level brought them into close contact on equal terms with their non-Jewish neighbors. In this sort of environment there was little room for prejudice. Furthermore the Christian idea that a remnant of Israel would someday bear witness to the truth of the gospels also contributed to that favorable position. Many Christians in America have long had the feeling that the day of final judgment was soon approaching. In the process of salvation, the Jews, they believed, were destined to play an important role; their conversion would herald the great day. Naturally, the Jews were to be treated in such manner as would hasten their redemption.[49]

The situation regarding the Jews in America remained the same as long as they were regarded merely as communicants of another American religion. This attitude remained unchanged until the turn of the twentieth century at which time elements came into being which were to bring about a serious change.

Social mobility has always been an important characteristic in the American way of life. The freedom found in its economic structure made room for the free play of talents and has permitted newcomers to make their way from lower to higher steps

in the occupational pyramid. In the absence of an hereditary aristocracy, social position has generally accompanied economic position.[50]

The earliest encounters of the Jews with this particular feature of the American socio-economic system were no different from those of members of other ethnic groups who passed through the same process. In adjusting to the American economy some groups moved upward much more rapidly than others. The Jews were among those who advanced most quickly in wealth and social position. Their particular difficulty arose from the circumstance that by 1900 they showed indications of rising faster than other groups of recent immigration. Actually, all who rose quickly on the socio-economic ladder earned the resentment of both the already well established and those who were forced to remain below. In the case of the Jews, however, they appeared particular interlopers and out of place. There were some good reasons for this phenomena. Economic power in America has in large measure always been associated with certain symbols of prestige and position, good family background, membership in the appropriate churches and associations, and residence in selected districts. Success on the part of Jews was resented not only because the success of every new arrival seemed to leave less room for others aspiring to rise but because success in their case was not graced with the proper symbols and did not take acceptable structure.[51]

Furthermore, the rapidity with which Jews rose had a tendency to heighten the sense of difference between them and the non-Jews on all levels. It is, of course, also true that many Jews reached positions of economic power and influence in so brief a time that they had no opportunity for adequate social adaptation. The contrast in behavior was, therefore, particularly noticable. "High Society" felt uncomfortable at the entrance to their strata of any outsiders, and it proceeded to ascribe its discomforts to the difference in manners rather than to inherent unwillingness to make room for competitors. As in every manifestation of prejudice, the Jew was in the same category as members of all minority groups; however, his exceptional mo-

bility and his outstanding religious differences made him a more prominent and a more vulnerable target.[52]

Exclusion was first prominently expressed in areas that involved the use of leisure time activities, because such activities — being less formalized than business — were open to more intimate relationships and therefore experienced the stranger's presence more readily. At the turn of the century, many places began to close their doors to Jews. After 1910 when the children of the immigrant Jews began to enter more keenly and more noticably into competition for professions and white collar vocations in the American economic system, the weight of prejudice became more formal and more open. Many non-Jewish American citizens, unwillingly perhaps, thus began to accept this pattern of discrimination.[53] Anglo-Saxon descent, Mayflower ancestry, and Revolutionary parentage began to be spoken of as the test of the true American, quite apart from adherence to the basic American ideals. However, the spirit of democracy in America was still too strong for these prejudices and distinctions to make any considerable headway. The country was as yet expanding too rapidly and economic opportunities were still too abundant for real anti-Jewish feeling to take root in the land.[54]

To assist in the many problems facing the newly created Jewish communities at the beginning of the twentieth century the American Jewish Committee was organized (1906). Among the leaders it attracted were such men as Louis Marshall, Jacob H. Schiff, Oscar S. Strauss, Felix M. Warburg, Cyrus Adler, Julius Rosenwald, and Sol M. Stroock. One of the many worthwhile achievements of the committee was its sponsorship of the American Jewish Relief Committee out of which was later created the Joint Distribution Committee. This organization is today the central agency for dealing with all major aspects of Jewish philanthropy.[55]

One of the basic influences upon American Jewish life was the rise of the Zionist movement. Under the leadership of Theodor Herzl since 1896, Zionism had come to embody an active program for the redemption of Palestine and its resettlement by Jews. This concept was, of course, not a new one. Jews the

world over had been praying for this ideal since the exodus. However, it was in the people of the east European ghettos that the dream crystallized into a more enduring program. With them it came to America. Despite the interest demonstrated in behalf of this ideal by Emma Lazarus and the great number of native American Jews and non-Jews, it met with great opposition on the part of many other American Jews, especially those of German origin. Nevertheless, the movement grew, particularly as outstanding Jews joined its ranks. Some of its adherents were Louis D. Brandeis, Henrietta Szold, Judah L. Magnes, and Stephen S. Wise. In a short time, little societies sprang up all over America, wherein the Jews of the widely scattered communities could discuss the movement and plan for its future.[56]

The Last Fifty Years

In 1891 Baron de Hirsch contributed approximately five million dollars to be used in a program to aid the Russian Jewish immigrants in the United States. With these funds an agricultural school was established in Woodbine, New Jersey and numerous scholarships were endowed. Subsequently the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society was created to work jointly with the already existing Jewish Colonization Association to encourage Jewish return to the land. By 1909 it was estimated that there were some thirty thousand Jews engaged in farming in thirty-four states. Agricultural societies were established to guide and advise inexperienced farmers. Some of their own men rose from the ranks and became leaders in the field of agriculture. One of these was David Lubin, founder of the International Agricultural Institute.[57]

At the end of World War I there occurred a major change in the internal structure of the American Jewish community. The cause of this was the abrupt close of immigration. As the result of this transition, second generation American Jews became predominant in the leadership of all religious groups. The emergence of an American-trained and American-centered religious leadership brought with it the development of new points of view on Judaism and different interpretations of the

special tasks which confronted the religious groups. While the leaders of the former generation saw as their central objective the development of strong and well-knit independent religious parties and institutions, the leadership of the new generation sought in addition spiritual hegemony over all American Judaism. This effort to create an indigenous American pattern of all American Jewry which would be predominantly Reform, Orthodox, or Conservative is the special characteristic of American Jewish religious history in the decades between the two World Wars.[58]

The second characteristic of this period was the refusal of the religious leadership to confine its role to that of the pastorate in American Jewish life. Reform leadership began to speak of relating their movement to the totality of American life; Orthodoxy sought to place all communal enterprises under the influence of Torah ideals; and Conservative Judaism proclaimed that the synagogue should be the center of all Jewish activities.[59]

The striving for an all-embracing program was expressed through an intensification of congregational activities and efforts. Each religious group planned to capture larger numbers for its special program, but it soon became evident that these theological arguments had little meaning to the general run of Jews. Actually this rivalry for primacy only lead to further misunderstanding and confusion, particularly on the local scene. Native American Jewish community life was generally very superficial as the result of a generation of de-Judaized Jews who had grown up in America. Thus, when a philosophy of Judaism was presented to them, it had no meaning or value. Consequently, when many Jews later did return to Jewish life as a result of the catastrophe in Germany, they identified themselves essentially with Jews rather than with Judaism.[60]

With the outbreak of World War II the Jewish religious community in America became united as never before in its history. A half million Jewish men and women served in the armed forces of the United States all over the globe. There were, however, other forces operating as well in Jewish life which were leading to a collaborative effort. These were the identification of the religious groups in a new conception of

higher Jewish education, the firm desire to remain rooted in American society and, in cooperation with other faiths and intellectual forces, to strengthen the spiritual foundations of American tradition; and finally the complete and fervent desire on the part of American Jewry to enlist in the struggle to establish the Republic of Israel.[61]

A historical survey of the Jews in America would not be complete without the mention at least of some of the most outstanding Jewish individuals who have made some contribution to the Jewish community and to the community at large.

Some of those who have been identified with the social sciences, psychology and social work are as follows: Ernst Freund, Jacob Hollander, Walter Lippman, Frederick L. Schuman, Morris Ernst, Max Lerner, Harold Lavine, Jacob Marcus, Bruno Lasker, Louis J. Dublin, Paul Felix Lazarsfeld, Jacob Lestschinsky, Horace M. Kallen, Fay and Maurice J. Karpf, Louis Wirth, Melville J. Herskovits, Hans Kelsen, Salo W. Baron, Max Radin, Jerome M. Frank, Abraham Epstein, Frank Tannenbaum, Bernard J. Stern, Edwin R. A. Seligman, Franz Boas, Mordecai Ezekiel, Harriet Rosenthal Mowrer, Pauline V. Young, Robert H. Lowie, Harry Alpert.[62]

Among Jews who have received special recognition in public office are Oscar S. Strauss, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., Samuel I. Rosenman, David E. Lilienthal, Bernard Baruch, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Louis D. Brandeis, Benjamin N. Cardozo, Felix Frankfurter, Herbert H. Lehman.[63]

In the field of science the following men have made outstanding contributions: Albert Einstein, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Albert A. Michelson.[64]

Some of those who have become prominent in the arts are: Arthur Rubinstein, Ernest Bloch, George Gershwin, Bruno Walter, Jascha Heifetz, Walter Damrosch, Yehudi Menuhin, Mischa Elman, Jan Peerce, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Jo Davidson, Jacob Epstein, and Jules Butensky.[65]

In the field of literature the following are best known: Edna Ferber, Fanny Hurst, James Oppenheim, Waldo Frank, Ludwig Lewisohn, Robert Nathan, Louis Untermeyer, Lillian Hellman, David Belasco, and Franz Werfel.[66]

In the area of the theatre, the films, and radio, these have contributed much: Elmer Rice, Channing Pollock, David Belasco, George S. Kaufman, Moss Hart, Clifford Odets, Sidney Kingsley, Davis Warfield, Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Charles Chaplin, Paul Muni, John Garfield, Edward G. Robinson, Sylvia Sidney, the Marx brothers, Melvyn Douglas, Paulette Goddard, Hedy Lamarr, Lauren Bacall, Dinah Shore, Danny Kaye, Adolph Menjou, Paul Lucas, Edward Arnold, Milton Berle, George Burns, Alice Faye, Phil Harris, Helen Menken, Sophie Tucker, Ed Wynne, Jack Benny, David Sarnoff, Fannie Brice, Oscar Hammerstein, Charles Frohman, the Shubert brothers, Marcus Loew, William Fox, Samuel Goldwyn, Darryl Zanuck, and the Warner brothers.[67]

The following best represent the Jews in the field of journalism: Joseph Pulitzer, Moses Koenigsberg, Adolph Ochs, Walter Lippman, Herbert B. Swope, Albert Deutsch, David Lawrence, and Ben Hecht.[68]

In philosophy may be found Morris Cohen, Otto Neurath, Irwin Edman, and Jerome Adler.[69]

This partial list of outstanding individuals indicates in some measure at least the impressive growth of Jewish activity in the last fifty years. In this connection it is important to note, although it is a sad commentary on the mental state of some Jews, that there are many Jews in America who have followed and are today following the achievements of their notable co-religionists with pride but also with some anxiety. They would prefer to see them advance less rapidly and less conspicuously.[70]

Since 1900 the Jewish community has risen from three and a half million to over five million persons. In these fifty years it has extended its role in every sphere of the nation's life. In its growth it has drawn on its resources for many and varied programs and interests for the alleviation of Jewish distress abroad, for the defense of Jewish rights everywhere, and for the upbuilding of the national home in Palestine. In the religious and cultural sphere, also, this era witnessed an intensification of effort on the part of every group, although the centrifugal forces, reflected in the general tendency toward secularization

and in the urge to total assimilation, took a heavy toll, especially in the smaller communities scattered throughout the land.[71]

There also has been, particularly in the last ten years, a quickening of the sense of cohesion in the general Jewish community, or at least a desire for it. However, there has been no leveling of the ideological barriers separating the various groups.

In general, American Jewry is far from constituting the compact and purposeful organism which many Jews believe it ought to be if it is to survive. "It" does not think alike, vote alike, or act together often enough. Its inner tensions present a spectacle that is far from edifying, and it would appear that only common dangers at home or abroad can prove capable of uniting them even for limited objectives. American Jewry, however, is now the largest aggregation under a single political jurisdiction in the world, and its numbers, wealth, and influence, if not its spiritual eminence and cohesion, give it leadership over the world Jewish community.[72]

A History of the Jews in Louisiana

Louisiana was prevented in its early years from encouraging the growth of Jewish communities such as existed in the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia because it had to contend with Bienville's Black Code, the first article of which decreed the expulsion of Jews from the Colony.[73] The "Code Noir" was issued in March, 1724, and remained in effect until Louisiana became the possession of the United States in 1803. After the Louisiana Purchase the Black Code continued in existence; however, the jurisdiction of the United States Constitution negated its religious implications.[74] It was actually not until 1868, however, that the Louisiana constitution proclaimed that "every person has the right to worship God according to his conscience."[75]

Despite legal restriction against Jewish people there are indications that individual Jews had been dribbling into Louisiana since 1718. For instance, one ship's listing[76] notes that aboard the *Count of Toulouse* sailing from France in 1718 were Jacob David, a shoemaker and Roman David, a tailor, bound for the

Louisiana Colony. The Davids were recruited as part of a company headed for the Dubreuil plantation somewhere north of New Orleans. In May of 1719 another ship set out for Louisiana among whose passengers were Robert Jacobs and his wife and Louis Solomon.[77]

In the 1760's a Jewish person by the name of Pallachio is known to have been a dealer in flour in New Orleans.[78] It is also recorded that in July, 1765, Samuel Israel, Alexander Solomons, and Joseph Depalicio, all Jews, purchased lands from Chevalier de Monberault.[79] Other records indicate that Bernard Gratz, a Philadelphia merchant,[80] was carrying on trade with merchants in Louisiana and that one Samuel Israel was a resident in New Orleans.[81] Shortly after the turn of the nineteenth century Judah Touro, well known because of his philanthropic work, came to New Orleans and brought with him several other Jews, including Ezekiel Salomon who subsequently became Governor of the United States branch bank. Judah Touro died in 1821.[82]

It was Jacob da Silva Solis, a Jewish merchant from New York, however, who was responsible for the founding of the first synagogue in Louisiana. He arrived in New Orleans about 1826 during the Passover season. Quite naturally he was unable to purchase *Matzoth,* which all pious Jews must use during this holiday, and there he solved the problem simply by baking his own *Matzoth.* This activity stimulated the interest of other Jews, and the group organized the first congregation in New Orleans called Shangari Chassed (Gates of Mercy). The state approved the charter in March, 1828, and that congregation survives today as Touro Synagogue.[83] For nearly twenty years this was the only synagogue in the state. The second synagogue, founded in 1845, was also organized in New Orleans. By this time there were approximately 125 Jewish families living in that community.[84] The first burial ground on record in Louisiana is the old Hebrew Rest Cemetery on Jackson Avenue, in New Orleans. It had been purchased by Maris Jacobs, on March 13, 1828.[85]

The Hebrew Foreign Mission Society of New Orleans, chartered in 1854, for the purpose of granting "aid to Israelites in foreign countries . . . ameliorating their spiritual, social, and

political condition"[86] was unique in that it was at that time the nation's only organized Jewish communal group of its type.[87] Another very unique program as far as Louisiana was concerned was the effort made in 1882 by the Hebrew Foreign Mission in conjunction with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Association to establish an agricultural Colony of Russian Jews at Sicily Island in Catahoula Parish. Some $5,000.00 was raised in the state and efforts were made to settle about fifty families, totaling 173 individuals, on 5,000 acres on Sicily Island near Harrisonburg, Louisiana. The charter for this community provided for a co-operative organization, the tracts to be assigned by lot with members privileged to purchase the land when able. The act required the establishment of a community to be governed by a board of seven persons, serving without pay. Cattle, horses, poultry, and farm implements and material were sent from New Orleans by the Hebrew Aid Society. Crops were actually planted. However, in the spring of 1882 the Mississippi River overflowed, inundating the entire area. The crops were ruined and many of the houses and much of the stock washed away. The colony broke up and some of its members moved into cities, others to the farm sections of the middle West, and still others became merchants, peddling their wares throughout the state.[88]

In the parishes outside of New Orleans, records of organized Jewish activities do not begin until the 1850's although there were individual Jews scattered throughout many of the Louisiana communities before that time.[89] (See Figure 3.)

The *Shreveport Times* of June 28, 1935 makes mention of Jews residing in that community in 1858, and there is evidence that a Hebrew Benevolence Association existed there in 1857 through the record of the purchase of some land by members of that group.[90]

In 1856 the congregation Bikur Cholim (visiting the sick) was established in Donaldsonville.[91] A synagogue was built in 1872. Congregation B'nai Israel (Sons of Israel) was established in Baton Rouge in 1859.[92] In Monroe the first Jewish congregation was established in 1859. A synagogue was built in 1870.[93]

The first group of Jews known to have arrived in Alexandria did so in 1848. They organized a congregation in 1861 and

built a synagogue in 1870.[94] The Hebrew Benevolent Society of Plaquemine was incorporated by legislative act on March 20, 1856 "to acquire a temple and establish a cemetery."[95]

In Lafayette, Alexander Mouton gave the Jews of that community a plot for burial purposes in 1869, and in 1881 he presented to the group a site for a synagogue. This was built in 1889.[96] (See Figure 4.)

Among the individuals in the history of Louisiana Jewry, Judah Touro has been considered the outstanding personality. He came to New Orleans from Newport, Rhode Island in 1802, to engage in the mercantile business. Subsequently he became one of the wealthiest men in Louisiana in his day. He fought with the American forces against the British in 1812. During his lifetime he contributed more than a million dollars to religious and social organizations throughout the entire nation. He founded Touro Infirmary and the Touro-Shakespeare Home in New Orleans.[97]

Another outstanding figure among the early Jews of Louisiana was Judah P. Benjamin, who migrated to New Orleans from Charleston in 1812. He proved to be a very important figure in the leadership of the Confederacy.[98]

In 1843 there were 125 Jewish families in New Orleans, and since that time the Jewish population of Louisiana has grown through immigration from Germany, Holland, England, and Jamaica and by migration particularly from such communities as Charleston, South Carolina, Cincinnati, and Baltimore.[99] In 1877 the Jewish population in Louisiana was 7,538 persons.[100] The total increased to 20,000 in the next twenty years; however, by 1917 it had decreased to 12,723, and in 1937 it was 15,935.[101] Percentages of the state's population that was Jewish in 1897, 1917, and 1937 were 1.6, 0.7, and 0.8 per cent, respectively. The 1937 percentage of Louisiana Jews (0.8) compares with 3.7 per cent for the Jewish population in the entire nation and 0.7 in the South.[102]

It has been estimated that Jews in groups of ten or more reside in approximately fifty communities throughout Louisiana. There are today approximately 14,000 Jews in the state.[103]

From this brief historical survey of the Jews in the United States an analysis of the Jewish community may be more adequately and more comprehensively undertaken.

NOTES

1. Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1951), p. 41.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 43. It is doubtful whether the most ardent philosemite will agree with Sombart in this observation.

3. Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, "Origins of Anti-Semitism in the United States," an essay in *Race Prejudice and Discrimination*, edited by Arnold M. Rose (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), p. 26.

4. Louis Finkelstein, (ed.), *The Jews, Their History, Culture, and Religion* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949, 2 vols.), p. 313.

5. Abraham Leon Sachar, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940), p. 299.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 299.

7. Anita Libman Lebeson, *Pilgrim People* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), pp. 62-63.

8. The *New York Times* (December 30, 1950) carried an article announcing plans for a nation-wide observance in 1954 and 1955 of the three hundredth anniversary of the settlement of Jews in the United States.

9. Sachar, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

10. Lebeson, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

12. Abram V. Goodman, *American Overture: Jewish Rights in Colonial Times* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947), p. 16.

13. Charles Reznikoff and Uriah Z. Engelman, *The Jews of Charleston* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1950), p. 7.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

15. It was interesting to note that in Charleston today there are several members of the congregation who are direct descendants of Joseph Tobias.

16. Reznikoff and Engelman, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

17. Lebeson, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

18. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 322.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 322.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 325.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 326.

23. Solomon Grayzel, *A History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947), p. 620.

24. See Werner Sombart, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46, who discusses in some detail the movement and activities of Jews in the South, particularly in Alabama, Kentucky, South Carolina and Texas.

25. Grayzel, *op. cit.*, p. 626.

26. Sachar, *op. cit.*, p. 308B.

27. Sachar, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

28. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

29. Sachar, *op. cit.*, p. 308a.

30. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

31. *Loc. cit.*

32. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

33. It is important to note the extent to which Christian missionaries have developed their program in an effort to proclaim the gospel of Jesus to Jews. Some units of this group are as follows: (The writer has in his possession publications by each of the units mentioned. On two occasions have representatives of the organizations contacted the writer) Message to Israel, Inc., New York; Board of Missions to Jews, Inc., New York; The Friends of Israel Missionary and Relief Society, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, Chicago, Illinois; Hebrew Christian Fellowship, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; The Hebrew Evangelization Society, Inc., Los Angeles, California; The Mildmay Mission to the Jews, London, England; New York Jewish Evangelization Society, New York; National Jewish Missions, Brooklyn, New York; The International Hebrew Christian Alliance, London, England; The Emmanuel Neighborhood House, Baltimore, Maryland; The Southern Messianic Witness to Israel, Chattanooga, Tennessee; Southern Evangel to Israel, Charlotte, North Carolina.

34. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

35. This poem is engraved on the base of the Statue of Liberty in the New York Harbor.

36. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 335.

38. Sachar, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

39. The largest international Jewish order, B'nai B'rith, had already been founded in 1843.

40. Sachar, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 307.

42. *Loc cit.*

43. *Ibid.*, p. 307.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 308.

45. *Loc. cit.*

46. Rufus Learsi, *Israel: A History of the Jewish People* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1949), p. 497.

47. Sachar, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

48. Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, *op. cit.*, p. 25. This material has been very closely paraphrased.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 26. Many non-Jews interviewed by this writer in connection with this work fervently hold to this idea.

50. Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

52. *Loc. cit.*

53. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

54. Grayzel, *op. cit.*, p. 701.

55. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 340.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 341.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 414.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 415.

60. *Loc. cit.*

61. *Ibid.*, p. 440.

62. L. L. Bernard, "Jewish Sociologists and Political Scientists," an essay in *The Hebrew Impact on Western Civilization*, Dagobert D. Runes (ed.), (New York, Philosophical Library, 1951), p. 63.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 113-124.

64. Runes, *op. cit.*, p. 245, 261.

65. Learsi, *op. cit.*, p. 626.

66. Runes, *op. cit.*, pp. 547-48.

67. Runes, *op. cit.*, pp. 594-622.

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 623-701.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 843-873.

70. Learsi, *op. cit.*, p. 627.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 621.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 622.

73. Rabbi Max Heller, *Jubilee Souvenir of Temple Sinai* (New Orleans: 1922), p. 1.

74. *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Louisiana: Jewish Congregations and Organizations* (Prepared by the Louisiana Historical Record Survey, Division of Community Service Programs, Works Project Administration, 1941).

75. *Ibid.*, p. XIV.

76. Albert Laplace Dart, "The Ships Lists of Passengers Leaving France for Louisiana, 1718-1724," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XIV, (1931), pp. 516, 520.

77. *Ibid.*, pp. 455-467.

78. Inventory of Church and Synagogue, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

79. *Loc. cit.*

80. See page 20 (re Gratz family).
81. Heller, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
82. Leo Shpall, *The Jews in Louisiana* (New Orleans: Steeg Printing Co., 1936).
83. Inventory of Church and Synagogue, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
85. *Loc. cit.*
86. *Loc. cit.*
87. Heller, *op. Cit.*, p. 11.
88. Inventory of Church and Synagogue, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.
89. See page 43.
90. Inventory of Church and Synagogue, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 7 .
97. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
98. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
99. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
100. *Loc. cit.*
101. *Loc. cit.*
102. *Loc. cit.*
103. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

CHAPTER THREE

The Jewish Community in the United States

General Concepts of Community

During the last two decades there has appeared a significant amount of literature dealing with the techniques for the analysis of community life, but this period also witnessed the development of a broader range of meanings of the term community to the point that the task of establishing a working definition has become difficult as well as confusing.[1]

As an introduction to the concept of the Jewish community the general concept of community as presented by three sociologists will be examined, namely: R. M. MacIver,[2] C. C. Zimmerman,[3] and A. B. Hollingshead.[4]

MacIver refers to the community as the term used to "apply to a pioneer settlement, a village, a city, a tribe, or a nation."[5] He is of the opinion that "wherever the members of any group, small or large, live together in such a way that they share, not this or that particular interest, but the basic conditions of a common life, we call that group a community. The mark of a community is that one's life *may* be lived wholly within it that all one's social relationships *may* be found within it. . . . The basic criterion of community, then, is that all of one's social relationships may be found in it."[6]

It is evident that MacIver views the community as the most inclusive grouping of man. In his consideration of the community his basic task appears to be the analysis of a community's bases of locality and common feeling, the aspects of the national community, and the unifying differentiation within the community.[7] This approach emphasizes the attitudes, interests, and interrelationships of people who are a part of society.[8]

Zimmerman, after a comprehensive review and criticism of various definitions of community, takes the position that "the community is one of many types of aggregates constituting the 'human plural,' . . . which contains four characteristic elements: (1) *social fact* (social action), (2) *definite specification* (each community is unique), (3) *association,* and (4) *limited area,* (a relatively definite and compact geographic base)."[9]

Zimmerman's main method in studying his community is the use of the "ideal-typical" type which becomes an exaggeration of certain traits. This formula lends itself more readily to the stressing of the fundamental qualitative and quantitative aspects of the community.

Hollingshead's contribution deals with a review of research on the community.[10]

He points out that historically the first period of interest in community study was marked by an emphasis on *normative* characteristics, the second period by the *normative-meliorative* approach, and the third period emphasized the *analytical* approach.[11]

During the last fifteen years community studies have fallen into three categories on the basis of their central focus. These categories are as follows: *ecological, structural,* and *typological.*[12]

To Hollingshead human ecology has for its working hypothesis the principle of the adjustment of man to habitat as a process of community development.[13] The structural approach is based on the assumption "that inhabitants of a community are aware of differences between themselves which are of such importance to them that their interpersonal relations are organized systematically into horizontal differentiated structure . . . It is assumed, further, that the essence of community life may be caught by studying the structure of social relations."[14] The

typologists approach the study of the community "from the viewpoint of its culture, its relations to other communities, its geographic and economic bases, its size, and its population composition, to determine how these factors organize and give meaning to the activities and interpersonal relations of its inhabitants."[15]

Hollingshead concludes his appraisal of the work done in the area of community with the observation that the basic problem students of the community should face is *clarification of terminology,* and he suggests that the solution to this problem "is the definition of terms and the limitation of terms, as defined, to empirical phenomena to which they are applicable."[16] This is essentially the problem which confronts the student of the Jewish community.

The Jewish Concept of Community

Jewish communal history throughout the millennia of Diaspora life has long been the subject of considerable scholarly attention.[17] The European community of the pre-emancipation era has for many years attracted modern investigation because of its many extraordinary characteristics. Its remarkable combination of religious and secular authority, its almost "extra-territorial" status and "sovereign" political powers, and its overwhelming influence and control over its members have been the source of much historical and sociological analysis.

"Jewish community" has become an equivocal concept. It embodies the wide variety of meanings generally attached in anthropological, juristic, and sociological literature to the term community.[18] The complexity of connotations has been increased by the uncertainties associated with the adjective "Jewish."[19] To the controversy of the recent years concerning the primacy of the religious, cultural or national element in the Jewish group have been added the effects of the policy made famous by the Nazi, which includes within the Jewish community all "racial" Jews, *i.e.,* persons who have Jewish "blood" in them. While both religious and nationalistic Jews have always agreed as to the meaning of the Jewish community of descent, destiny, and cul-

ture, they have also insisted on the preponderance of a subjective criterion, *i.e.*, voluntary allegiance of an individual whether to his religious denomination or to his ethnic group.[20] According to the "racial" theory doctrine, however, subjectivity is entirely eliminated and membership in the Jewish community is immutable and wholly independent of individual will.[21]

In considering the Jewish community as an entity one must be cautioned against conceiving the Jewish group as homogeneous or compact. From any point of view that one might measure Jewish community life — their synagogue affiliations, their economic or social status, their attitude toward religion, education and social problems, and even toward the important question of the perpetuation of their own group identity — a great range of divergence will be found. Far from being closely welded together, Jews have little central organization and little ecclesiastical unity.[22]

It must be noted also that any critical analysis of Jewish life, no matter what the nature or scale of the undertaking, must seek its beginning in early Judaism and it must inquire into the causes of the pronounced singularity of temper and purpose that mark off the Jewish community from all other groups. This religious philosophy must be recognized and understood if for no other reason than that it has been responsible for creating a distinctive Jewish character and for disciplining it for later behavior which was to set a stamp on all Jewish behavior and result ultimately in the unique character of the Jewish community of today. This character seems to have been determined by an interweaving of a substantial body of religious thought, customs, and institutions slowly becoming solidified under the pressure of conflict and oppression and resulting in a strong bond of community, identity, and solidarity. As generations passed the Jew tenaciously held to his beliefs and traditions and stubbornly refused to assume a protective coloring or to merge with the surrounding social scene. As a result, society at large has stamped the Jews as being different. It appears that herein is to be found the basic cause for anti-Jewish feeling as may exist. The answer would seem to be that anti-Jewish feeling is the classic

example of that dislike and fear of strangers which the Greeks knew as xenophobia.

The foregoing cursory observations indicate in some measure the difficulty one faces in analyzing the Jewish community. Added to the above primary elements which must be considered when viewing the Jewish community is the unique characteristic which tends to give the Jewish community a universal quality. In a sense the Jewish community may also be considered in the manner in which the ancient Greeks understood the "Great Community,"[23] i.e., the community which embraces all other communities. However, whereas in the case of Greek thought the basic denominator which held the great community together was political in nature, in the case of the Jewish community it has been and is today a Jewish culture the essence of which is religion. The Jewish religion has been both the outstanding characteristic and the chief dynamic force of the peculiar Jewish way of life. Whatever is the nature of this culture, its unifying strength must by far surpass that of any other culture, for no other culture has had to create unity out of such diversity of sub-cultures.[24]

Here, then, is an example of national community without the possession of a national territory. The answer to this unique condition may be found in the immutable belief which most Jews have that when they went into exile they never really left *Eretz Israel* (the land of Israel) because wherever they went they carried with them a sort of "portable" fatherland. Diaspora Judaism was thus able to retain its virility and creative power because it was able to build on foreign soil citadels of the spirit which were of the same mold as those reared earlier in the homeland.[25] The extent to which the awareness of the organic unity of the national and the religious element is part of the Jewish fabric is evident especially from post-biblical Jewish literature, the *Talmud,* the *Midrash,* the great commentaries and rabbinic compendia, and countless liturgical powers. This vast body of Jewish religious and cultural expression furnishes ample indication and testimony that Jewry never conceived its role to be other than that of a nation — a nation without a country — but still possessed of all non-territorial national characteristics,

a language, a common history, a shared destiny, and a hope for the future. In many ways the prayers, the observance of the festivals, the rules governing their private lives made Eretz Israel, the lost homeland, a living reality in the life of every Jew integrated into the traditions of his people.[26]

The analysis made of the Jewish group by the contemporary student of Judaism, Milton Steinberg[27] obscures further the concept of the Jewish community. He states that although Jews are a religious communion, they are not exclusively so because a multiplicity of non-religious elements, which are manifestly cultural in character, are comprised within Judaism. However, Steinberg is of the opinion that while *culture* describes certain aspects of Judaism it is too limited a concept to catch the whole idea of what herein is termed a social system. Steinberg suggests that beyond the intellectual and the aesthetic which the word *culture* suggests are other elements – things, movements, causes, and institutions of all sorts devoted to the widest variety of purposes. A better concept than culture, believes Steinberg, is *civilization* and thus, according to him, Judaism emerges as a religious civilization, a civilization composed of three motifs: Faith, Tradition, and Peoplehood.

It appears, however, that despite the foregoing statements if one is to make an effort to portray, to examine, and to analyze the concept of the Jewish community, one must first consider the question regarding the existence of a Jewish culture and endeavor to define it if it does exist.

The Nature of Jewish Culture

Mark Zborowski in his article on "The Children of the Covenant"[28] begins his analysis of Jewish culture by pointing out that the history of the Jews is a history of acculturation. Throughout the Diaspora the "ideal-typical" Jewish community has combined, in varying degrees, elements that reflect the surrounding non-Jewish culture and elements that were regarded both by the Jews and by their neighbors as essentially Jewish. A large majority of the Jews in the United States stemmed from Eastern Europe either by nativity or by descent and for them

this background represents a culture base from which they have traversed varying phases of acculturation. This "base" itself the product of earlier acculturation processes had become stable and clear cut enough to function as a source of tradition and a rewarding subject of cultural analysis.

According to Zborowski the basic elements of Jewish culture are the Torah, which is the ultimate authority for any aspect of Jewish community life; the Synagogue, which is the center of Jewish community life; the covenant, which is the eternal bond between God and the Jewish people; and the concomitants of that covenant which include the basic conceptions related to the meaning of being a Jew and of living the life of a Jew. Implied in the latter are such matters which pertain to laws and regulations directing the pattern of behavior of all Jews as to marriage, family, education, business, and relations to non-Jews.

The three main functions of the synagogue correspond to three central life activities of the Jew. The synagogue is a house of prayer, a house of study, and a house of assembly. Its triple function keeps alive the dictum voiced by the Sages over two thousand years ago: The world is based on three things: on service to God, on study of the Torah, and on charity dealt with by congregational assembly.

According to religious tradition, God and the Jews are bound by an eternal pact. This pact was made with Abraham and was finally sealed with all Jews for all time by the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. The pact is, by definition, a twofold agreement. On the one hand, the Jews accept God as their only God and undertake to fulfill all His commandments. God, on the other hand, promises to cherish them as His chosen people. While the covenant became binding on each Jew for all time, it is, nevertheless, renewed with the birth of each male child through the act of circumcision and makes the newborn Jew subject to all the privileges and duties of the Jewish people.

According to the pact it is basic that a Jew in relation to another Jew or in relation to any creature, human or animal, shall be guided by the complementary principles of compassion and justice which determine the behavior of God to man. Com-

passion is hardened by justice and justice is softened by compassion. The pact contains six hundred and thirteen commandments, which the Jews accepted in bloc. Inherent in the fact is, of course, the idea of reward and punishment. Thus, it is that by living up to the obligations of the pact one earns rewards and at the same time helps to bring about the ultimate reward of the Chosen People, namely the coming of the Messiah and the return to the Promised Land. In addition one enjoys earthly esteem and pleasures, through the approval of his fellowmen and the joy derived directly from doing good deeds, performing one's duty, and studying the work of God.

The anonymous author of the essay on "An Analysis of Jewish Culture," published in *Jews in a Gentile World*[29] visualizes the nature of Jewish culture from a different point of view. To the question what is the nature of Jewish culture he has the following answer:

> To those familiar with recent anthropological literature it is needless to point out that the term 'Jewish culture' has no reference to the Talmud, to the disputations of medieval rabbis, or to an ancient literature. The sort of culture the anthropologist speaks of is something quite different, subtler, and much more important. It is, to use the poetic expression Ruth Benedict borrowed from an aged Zuni, a people's 'cup of life' – and the life they drink from it.

The best way to introduce the analysis of Jewish culture, continues the author, is to distill its essence into a few words. The following then constitute the basic elements in Jewish culture. To begin with Jews do not place their emphasis on mechanical things but on personality, for personality is the core, the heart, of Jewish culture – from Jesus to Spinoza to Freud and through them all has run this intense interest in personality. In the family, in the community, in social life, in the arts and sciences, in economic life – everywhere the emphasis is on the relationship between people.[30]

Jewish culture is characterized by an overruling belief in something called education. The exigencies of Jewish religion

have kept Jews a literate people and supplied them always with a historical perspective.[31]

Although Jewish culture is perhaps one of the most disciplined in the world in certain aspects, it is also individualistic — almost to the extent of anarchy. To the outsider it is the internal cohesion that seems most remarkable and Jews appear almost tribal in their integrity. To leaders on the inside, on the other hand, the conditions of Jews seem anarchical.[32]

The Jewish group, according to the author, is not ethnocentric in the sense that other cultural groups are. Jewish culture does not seek consciously to impose itself upon the outer world. It is, rather, characteristic of Jewish culture to stamp its imprint on every other culture with which it comes in contact not as a group, not as a matter of policy, not even consciously or deliberately but always as specific and individual.[33]

There is still another quality of Jewish culture which, claims the author, distinguishes it from almost any other culture that has ever existed, namely its historically urban character. This means that while this quality might be intensely personal in all its emphasis, it is also successful in abstract relationships, particularly in those most abstract of all, money relationships.[34]

In concluding this particular approach to the analysis of Jewish culture it might be well to give the following quotation from the author who is being considered:

> In her penetrating book *Patterns of Culture,* Ruth Benedict has shown how all the traits and complexes of a culture tend to conform to a characteristic pattern. From this point of view one might say that the culture of Jews is Apollonian in character — temperate and sober that is — rather than Dionysian or ecstatic. The traditional Jew frowns on ecstasy no matter how achieved — through religion, alcohol, drugs, or any other way. Orgiastic experience of any kind has no place in his scheme of things. The tempo of his culture is measured, regulated to an ancient pace, for endurance, survival, rather than for speed; nothing which tends to interfere with the normal pulsation of the cultural heartbeat is tolerated. Mystical experience in religion, drunkenness, the moral holiday — no. The religion of the

> Jews has been tempered to human nature, made easy. It demands very little — no searching of the heart, no moral conflict, no sacrifice. No need, therefore, for mystical escapes.[35]

In the two foregoing analyses of Jewish culture may be found perhaps some clues to the characteristics which the many scattered groups of Jews have in common and which may be designated as a base for culture typical to Jews — and, incidentally, which in turn has given and is now giving specific character to the behavior pattern of Jews and a uniqueness to the community of which they are a part, past and present.

The Pre-emancipation Jewish Community

Until the emancipation after the Napoleonic wars the Jewish community could conceivably be likened to the "folk society."[36] While the Jewish community in those days was not ignorant of people other than themselves, they did possess many of the characteristics attributed to a folk society. They had a strong sense of belonging together; they were much alike. Being forced to live together in long intimacy with one another they developed something of a single biological type; they were isolated, and thus they were homogeneous with a strong sense of group solidarity. As a group they were economically independent of all others. In a sense, each Jewish community of the ghetto era became a world in which the recurrent problems of life were met by all its members in much the same way. The ways in which members of those communities met the recurrent problems of life became conventionalized ways; they were the results of long inter-communication within the group in the face of these problems. In time the conventionalized ways became interrelated within one another so that they resulted in a system of norms and values. It is this system which actually constitutes what is known as Jewish culture. In the case of the Jews in those ghetto communities this integrated whole, this system of normative values, provided for all the recurrent needs of the individual from birth to death and of the community through the seasons

of the year. It was especially true in those old Jewish communities that life was conceived to be one broad activity out of which no one part was separated or without influence from the whole.[37]

What then were the basic elements of the pre-emancipation Jewish community and what influence did they have upon its members? The most outstanding of these elements were the development of an elaborated religious system, an educational system, and a family system.

The most outstanding and the chief dynamic force of the pre-emancipation Jewish community was the Jewish religion. In those very unique communities of the ghetto it soon became co-extensive with all life activities — so that between the religious and the secular there was a steady interplay of influences. It was from the religious concept that all tradition, all customs, all institutions, all art, literature, music emanated. In short, these attitudes and sentiments in the consciousness of that community and the institutions and practices in which they found their expression were centered around their religion.

In those days Jews believed that the Jewish people possessed in its Torah the key to salvation, both in this world and in the world to come. They took for granted that the Pentateuch was dedicated by God to Moses. They were certain that the Rabbinic interpretation of the Mosaic Code was divinely sanctioned, and therefore, eternally binding. To those Jews the career of the Jewish people was centered in God's providential scheme for mankind. For them no sacrifice could be too great, no suffering could be too unbearable for the sake of belonging to such a community of people.[38]

Talcott Parsons explains[39] the place of Judaism in the Jewish community by pointing out that which differentiates the Jewish people more than anything else from other groups is their strong religious character. "Israel and the Law are one" is not a mere saying but an actual fact. Without the Law, which is its religion, the Jewish community is inconceivable. The reason for the importance of religion in the life of the Jews becomes quite obvious when one considers that during their existence in the Diaspora their religion served as the strongest unifying force.

It was their religion that made it possible for them to live as separate entities within larger societies with whom they have little or nothing in common.[40]

Springing also from the fountainhead of religion was the Jewish organization for learning. Three outstanding ideas run like a central thread throughout the history of Jewish education.[41] 1. It is religious in its character and is primarily concerned with the development of an ethical and religious personality. 2. It is intellectual and holds to the idea of learning for its own sake. 3. It is practical and provides for a continual process of adjustment on the part of the people for the survival of the group in a changing environment. Jews feel that they have contributed much to the ideal of democratic education (if by that is meant education for the masses) and to the scheme which is generally called extension education. From the very earliest days of Jewish history the education of the adult was considered one of the most important activities of the Jews. The priests and the prophets were teachers of adults. The synagogue was a school for adults in which the Torah was taught and interpreted by the Scribes.

Louis Wirth sums up the position of learning in Jewish life very clearly in his article on "Education for Survival"[42] by pointing out that the strong emphasis and high evaluation which the Jews have historically placed on learning created a common consciousness and coherence which assured their survival as a separate group despite their wide dispersion.

The third outstanding element of that particular community which also had its source in Judaism and which was in large measure responsible for its uniqueness as well as its survival was the consecration and meaning given to marriage and the family among Jews.

Rabbi Sidney E. Goldstein presents very graphically the characteristics of and the values related to the concepts of marriage and family among Jews[43] in his observation that, according to the teachings of Judaism, marriage is something more than a biological mating, something more than an economic partnership, something more than a social institution, something more than a legal entity, something more even than psychological association — marriage, according to the teachings of

Israel is a consecration and a santification. Its purpose is to hallow and to sanctify the relationship of husband and wife, as it is the purpose of every commandment to hallow and sanctify conduct. The Jewish family, moreover, has a special function. Family life in Israel has been developed and conserved through customs and ceremonies in the home rather than in the school or synagogue. The Friday evening service that welcomes the Sabbath, the annual Passover Feast and the home observance of other festivals and holidays, the celebration of happy anniversaries, and the marking of sad remembrances and the days of mourning — all these have made the Jewish home not only a refuge and a defense in time of trial and oppression but a sanctuary and a source of joy, courage, and inspiration in every period of Jewish life. The Jewish people owe their survival in large part to three institutions: the school, the synagogue, and the family. The Jewish family becomes through the cultivation of its own genius a sacred circle in which members are bound together in a spirit of common understanding, mutual sympathy, and unremitting sacrifice. The resources upon which the Jewish family draws are not material but spiritual and the chief resource is the heritage of the People of Israel.[44]

In short, the total Jewish home has for many centuries been a stronghold of Jewish life, hallowed by the spirit of love and reverence; by moral discipline and by religious observance and worship.

It is of particular significance to study carefully Albert Einstein's[45] searching observations regarding the characteristics of the pre-emancipation Jewish community and its influence upon the strength, vitality, and solidarity of its members.

> "The Jews in the ghetto," states Einstein, "were poor, without political rights, separated from the Gentiles by a barrier of religious tradition, habit of life, and legal restriction. Their intellectual development was restricted to their own literature, and they had remained almost unaffected by the mighty advances of the European intellect — and yet these obscure, humble people had one great advantage over us; each of them belonged in every fibre of his being to a community in which he was completely ab-

sorbed, in which he felt himself a fully privileged member and which demanded nothing of him that was contrary to his natural habits of thought. Our forefathers in those days were pretty poor specimens intellectually and physically, but socially speaking they enjoyed an enviable spiritual equilibrium."

Steinberg elaborates further on the structure of the ghetto community when he says that there he (the Jew) was protected by tradition; his religion invested his existence as Jewish intimation of eternity. Knowing the culture of his people, becoming identified with it he felt that it enriched and stimulated him. The prophets, the saints and the sages of the Jewish past were his companions. No matter what the larger community might say or do he knew that Judaism and Jewishness were honorable and meaningful realities. That knowledge strengthened his sense of worth.[46]

This, then, is a brief portrayal and analysis of the structure and the function of the pre-emancipation Jewish community; its basic elements, its strength and weaknesses, and its influence upon the Jews of that day and of the Jews of the future.[74]

The "Ideal-Typical" American Jewish Community of Today — A Composite Picture

It is safe to say that the great majority of Jews in America today would be pleased to be a part of the ideal community portrayed by Professor Israel Friedlaender. He perceives a community great in number, mighty in power, enjoying life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; true life, not mere breathing space; full liberty, not mere elbow room; real happiness, not that of pasture beasts; actively participating in the civic, social, and economic progress of the country, fully sharing and increasing its spiritual possessions and acquisitions, doubling its joys, halving its sorrows; yet deeply rooted in the soil of Judaism, clinging to its past, working for its future, true to its traditions, faithful to its aspirations, one in sentiment with their brethren wherever they are, attached to the land of their fathers as the cradle and resting place of the Jewish spirit; men with straight

backs and raised heads, with big hearts and strong minds, with no conviction crippled, with no emotion stifled, with souls harmoniously developed, self-centered and self-reliant; a community such as the Prophet of the Exile saw in his Vision: "And marked will be their seed among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples. Everyone that will see them will point to them as a community blessed by the Lord."[48]

If the modern Jewish community in America even remotely resembled the utopia described by Professor Friedlaender it would be a simple matter to portray it and analyze it. In reality that is not the case. In the first place, the Jewish community in America is in the process of transition from the pre-emancipation type to that which might be termed ultramodern reform which holds its religious services on Sunday. Further complications in the analysis of a Jewish community may be found. In many larger communities there exist several separate Jewish communities which live in different sections of the area and which develop their own institutions and go their own ways. Regardless of the particular type of Jewish community, it must not be forgotten that every Jewish community in America is faced with the phenomenon of "biculturality,"[49] and that the great majority of the individual members of these particular communities feel that they exist in a marginal climate.[50] These two conditions have profoundly influenced the character of the Jewish community.

The most universal and the most deep-seated characteristic resulting from the above mentioned conditions is the "collective conscience"[51] which persists in all Jewish communities, a condition existing when an aggregation is considered as a psychic unity. This phenomenon persists not only because of the unique cultural background of the Jewish people but also because no matter how thin the line between Jews and non-Jews becomes the Jew still finds himself far from constituting a full-fledged member of the general community and his position remains one of ambivalence.[52]

Even a casual survey of the many Jewish communities in America indicate that they are complex and multi-themed.

One finds it necessary, thus, to approach the examination

of an "ideal-typical" Jewish community in America through the conceptual tool the "ideal type" made famous by Max Weber.[53] In this portion of the chapter an effort will be made to construct an extreme or "pure case" of an American Jewish community, the validity of which may be questioned if it is viewed as a representation of the empirically existent but which may prove valuable if used for comparison and measurement of real communities.

One is inclined to question the applicability of the general community concept to the analysis of the "ideal" Jewish community for the reason that most working definitions of community include the idea of territorial area.[54] Since the Jewish community is more a social system than a true community and since it is always a community widely scattered within the larger community – a culture within a culture – the community concept which will be utilized in this study emphasizes the functional view, albeit recognizing that geographic elements are related to the basic structure of the Jewish community as well as any other community but not to the extent that it does in the case of the general community. It is true, for instance, that in the case of the general community if the community disappears the geographic base also disappears; however, if a Jewish community disappears the general community remains as does its geographic base.

The "ideal-typical" Jewish community is a definitely specified form of human association.[55] It contains the characteristic elements found in any community, i.e., social action, uniqueness, association, and territorial area.[56] However, it must be noted again that the element *territorial area* does not carry with it the same significance as it does in the study of the general community.

It appears, therefore, that the uniqueness of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community makes it difficult to classify in any of the general types.[57] It is conceivable that further study will result in a redefining of this type of community within a new frame of reference, a category of community types in which the "ideal-typical" Jewish community may be conveniently placed. Until a new category is developed it is conceivable that the

"ideal-typical" Jewish community can best be understood if seen within the framework set up in the Durkheim concept: the social fact.[58]

Background of the "Ideal-typical" Jewish Community. The earliest members of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community were German Jews who arrived in the general community around the 1840's. These were few in number. Twenty years later there followed a large number of Jews from Eastern Europe. While there were some basic differences between these two groups there was found one particular characteristic which they had in common. On their arrival to the new world both groups were heavily predisposed in favor of business and trade, the professions and shopkeeping. They lacked, except for tailoring, any inclination or aptitude for industry, and the American economic structure actually encouraged and strengthened them in their historic tendencies.[59] The German Jews lived in the better residential section of the general community. Theirs was in no sense a ghetto. They lived in close proximity to their business establishments and enjoyed comforts equal in most respects to those enjoyed by all merchants of the general community, except the very wealthy. They lived in good homes which most of them soon owned. Their children went to public school and to college. They were friendly with their non-Jewish neighbors and were eager to conform to the American pattern of living and to be integrated into the American cultural pattern. They had little to do with Jewish ceremonialism, although they did attend religious services in their temple.[60]

The East European Jews, on the other hand, settled in a special section of the general community and for a time made an effort to develop a form of self-segregation. They lived in poorer homes and built their Synagogue near those homes. The center of their lives was the Synagogue and for many years they maintained their religious customs in their homes and Synagogue. Some even clung tenaciously to the garb which had characterized them in their East European communities. These Jews were prone to go into industry, primarily in consumer goods. Few went into the professions.

As time passed the two groups began to feel the need of cooperative action, and as the East European Jews began to become Americanized and the German Jews began to understand better and appreciate more their co-religionists there resulted a united Jewish community.

The People. The "ideal-typical" Jewish community has grown at about the same rate as the general community although the Jewish birthrate is lower than that of the general community.[61] The Jewish families are becoming smaller. The Jewish birth-rate is 10.2 while that of the general community is 17.1.[62] The members of the Jewish community recognize that this rate is far below the true death-rate and they are well aware of the fact that this is the beginning of a net loss period for the Jewish population.

At present the Jewish community composes approximately two per cent of the total general population. The majority of its population is American-born. Aside from several refugee families which arrived since 1935, there has been no immigration of European Jews.

Intermarriage in the "ideal-typical" Jewish community is also becoming a factor, although not a serious one, in reducing the Jewish numbers.[63] The rate of intermarriage is five per cent, which is still lower than that of any other ethnic group. The Jews still seem to be the most endogamous of all groups except the Negroes.[64]

Today the Jewish population is found to be living in all parts of the general community, that is, in accordance with their economic status.

In general, it appears that the "ideal-typical" Jewish community displays most of the middle class characteristics.[65] For instance, eight per cent of the Jewish young people are married as against thirteen per cent of non-Jews; 3.6 per cent of the Jewish young people have children as against 8 per cent of the non-Jews; 8 per cent of the Jewish children go to college as against 4 per cent of the non-Jews; the average I. Q. for Jewish school children is 106, as against 100 for the rest of the community. The homicide rate among the Jews is half that for the larger community and so is the death-from-accident rate;

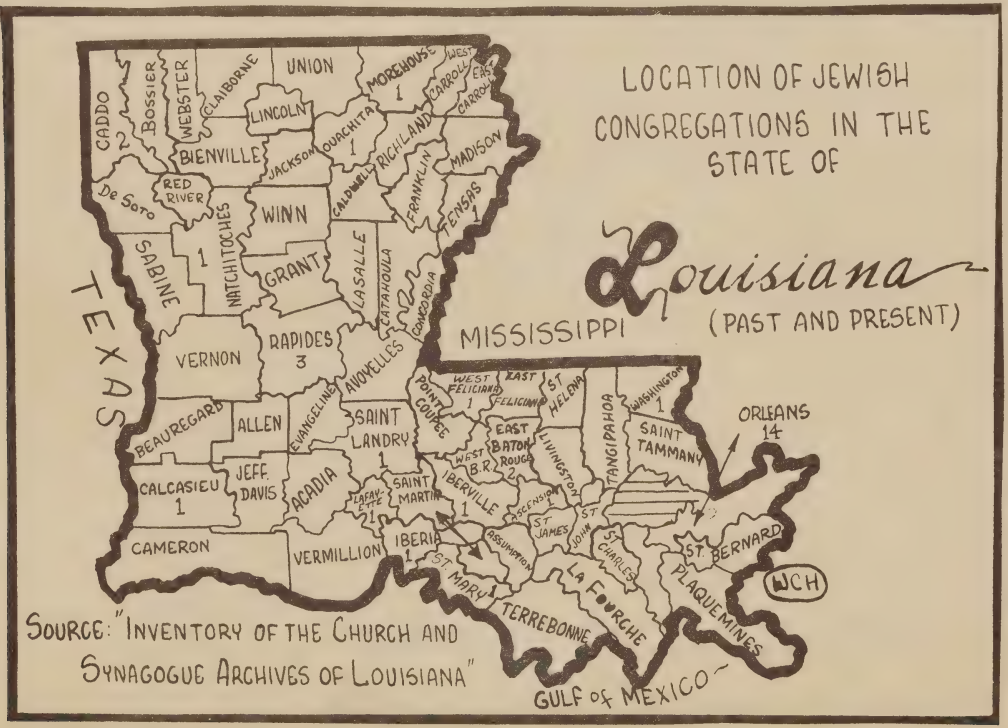

Figure 3. Location of Jewish Congregations in the State of Louisiana.

Source: "Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Louisiana"

Figure 4. Location of Jewish Cemeteries in the State of Louisiana.

the suicide rate is also somewhat smaller, and indeed all death rates, except that for diabetes, are lower. The juvenile delinquency rate is less than half the community wide average. Income of Jewish men average nearly 25 per cent higher than that of the non-Jews. Thirty-four per cent of the fathers of the Jewish youth are proprietors, managers, or officials, against 15 per cent of the fathers of non-Jewish youth; 3 per cent of the Jewish fathers are unskilled workers, as against 19 per cent of the fathers of the non-Jewish youth.[66] In short, in matters of belief, behavior, activities, income, and occupational distribution, the Jewish community seems well established in the middle class level.

Occupation and Economic Structure. There is one definite trend in the occupational pattern of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community. Gradually the relative number of Jewish employees is increasing, while the percentage of Jewish employers is decreasing.[67] This is probably due to the fact that the native born Jewish children prefer to be employees rather than proprietors of small retail establishments. While the American born Jew is still interested in commerce he prefers to be a salesman or a buyer rather than a proprietor of a store. A recent study of the high school graduates of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community indicates that the majority of them prefer to be salaried workers.[68]

An analysis of the gainfully employed Jews in the community shows that fully 78.2 per cent of them were employed in 1930.[69]

The largest concentration of employers and self-employed is to be found in trade and in the several professions. Of these 56.5 per cent are in commerce and 20.1 are in professional service. This, to a certain extent, can be expected. Many professions are self-employed. A considerable number of those in commerce are usually proprietors of stores or some other mercantile establishment. Practically all of those in the clerical occupations (97.5 per cent) are employees. Almost three-fourths of those in transportation and communication are wage or salary workers. More than three-fifths of those in manufacturing

and approximately fifty-five of every hundred in trade are employees.[70]

Goldberg's study further indicates that 4 out of 10 Jews in the "ideal-typical" Jewish community are clerks or kindred workers. This includes those who work in offices as well as salesmen, saleswomen, buyers and the like. Approximately 28 out of every 100 are proprietors, managers, and officials. One-tenth are professionals and another tenth are semi-skilled. The others are skilled workers, government employees, and unskilled workers. Many of the Jewish proprietors are owners of small business and manufacturing establishments. There are very few bankers, brokers, and proprietors of large industrial plants.[71]

It is significant to note the change in the occupational pattern of the members of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community during the last fifty years.

The survey of the occupational pattern for the foreign-born and native-born Jews in this community shows that almost twice as many of the first as of the second generation native-born Jews are in industry and approximately three times as many of the native-born as of the foreign-born are in the professions. Equally important is the fact that some of the native-born Jews do not work in the same industries as the immigrant group. There are 3.6 times as many of the native-born as of the foreign-born doing clerical work. The percentage of proprietors of grocery and clothing stores is greater among foreign-born. There are 2.6 times as many of the native-born as of foreign-born in public service.[72]

Community Organization. As was noted previously, in the early life of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community the synagogue structurally and functionally represented the nucleus of the great majority of the activities of both organized and individual Jewish life. The organization of the Jewish community, although in a sense "democratic," experienced moderate ecclesiastical domination, its values and programs were determined primarily by the religious leaders. Today in the "ideal-typical" Jewish community the synagogue and religious leaders have been relegated to a secondary position in Jewish communal affairs. The

rabbi is looked upon merely as a spiritual minister for such Jews as feel the need of religion.[73]

There is at present a new "Temple" in the Jewish community – neither quite ultra-modern nor quite purely orthodox. The great majority of Jews attend irregularly. However, the great majority are present on the high holy days.

As in all Jewish communities, the cemetery in this community appears second only to the synagogue among communal institutions. As a matter of fact, the Jews of the "ideal-typical" community actually possessed a cemetery before they built the first house of worship. The Jewish cemetery is located in the same area as are those of the general community. The cemetery is supervised by a committee of the Temple membership.

In connection with the Temple there is to be found a program of Jewish education supplementing the public schools. Here children receive instruction in Hebrew, the Bible, Jewish History, holidays and festivals. At the end of this instruction period the children are confirmed.

Also in connection with the Temple is to be found a Jewish community center. This is the focal point of community interest where recreational, social, educational, and cultural activities may be arranged for all age groups.

The "ideal-typical" Jewish community has for many years had a B'nai B'rith lodge (Sons of the Covenant), which is a fraternal organization of adult male Jews, and a Temple Sisterhood, which is a comparable women's organization. These groups meet monthly and participate in programs related to local, national, and international Jewish affairs.

The "ideal-typical" Jewish community contributes substantial financial aid to the needs of the general community as well as to those needs which are particularly Jewish on both local and national levels. The contributions which the Jews make to Jewish organizations are distributed to: (1). National organizations, (2). Relief societies, (3). Institution, and (4). Education.

Among the Jewish publications which are available to the members of the community are *The American Jewish Year Book, Commentary, Jewish Social Studies, The Jewish Review, The*

Jewish Social Service Quarterly, the B'nai B'rith publication, *The New Palestine,* and a Jewish newspaper, the *Foreword.*

One finds less and less of the group solidarity once known among the members of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community. Today the Jews are making every effort to become integrated members of the larger community. They are members of local civic and social clubs. They attend non-Jewish functions to a larger degree than they do Jewish functions. They make an effort to participate in all local activities. However, they recognize full well that whether by participation or merely by tradition, they remain Jews and are regarded as such by the community at large.

In conclusion it might be said that while in theory the members of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community regard it as one of many sister communities throughout the world, each adjusted to the social and political and economic conditions of the land of habitation, bound together by its cultural-religious inheritances and by the spiritual inspiration of the Israel center, in reality this is not the case at all.

The Jews of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community are today without any real recognized group status.[74] This alone is enough to render them an enigma to themselves and to the larger community. On the one hand, in their eagerness to become an integral part of the general community, they are determined to abandon all that remains of their former status as a nation in exile; on the other hand, under the impact of traditional loyalty they seek comfort in some form of collective life, be it congregation, fraternal order, or philanthropy.[75]

Strange as it may seem, the Jews are fearful of retrieving their Jewish communal solidarity even if they feel the importance and need of it. Their reluctance to do something constructive about their community structure is based on the fear that it might result in a form of self-segregation; that it might play into the hands of anti-Semites, most of whom believe that Jews are united in a conspiracy to dominate the rest of the world; and finally that it is impossible to strengthen the community unless the synagogue remains the center of its life, which is

not possible within the present structure of the American way of life.[76]

Another fundamental reason for the weakness of the Jewish communal structure has to do with one basic characteristic which has remained deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of the members of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community, generation after generation. This particular characteristic has influenced the nature of the communal structure because it colors profoundly its interests, its behavior, and its relationships. It is a feeling that a wall exists between Jews and the rest of the community; no matter how thin, nevertheless, it is there. It is their conviction that no matter what be the nature of the relationship between them and the rest of the community, sooner or later, speech and thought are no longer between one man and another but between a Jew and a non-Jew.[77]

This lack of group status, of direction and of singular purpose accounts for the lack of a meaningful philosophy and a successful program of Jewish life. Impelled by contradictory drives, Jews are forever frustrating one another's purposes and even their own. Out of these frustrations comes a sense of impotence and futility, of inferiority and even self-hatred.[78] The ominous fact about Jewish life in the community being here portrayed is that it exists for the most part only by dint of momentum derived from old-world Jewry. That momentum is fast fading out due to centrifugal forces impinging upon it from the surrounding environment. The main reason that the Jewish community has not generated its own momentum is that it lacks that imponderable but most influential factor — status.[79]

The reasons for the lack of status by the total Jewish group is not clear to either the Jews or to the members of the larger community. Many Jews have become so tangled in their own dialectics that they have grown uncertain about this basic problem in their lives and are not sure what course to take to solve it. The non-Jew, on the other hand, simply attributes this condition to the undesirable characteristics which he believes characterize the Jew.[80] Also he has a simple solution to the problem. He is in favor of Jews becoming assimilated with and absorbed by the larger community. He thinks further that it is time to

liquidate this anachronism of a separate community, which cannot be defined either as a separate race or religious sect, or nation, and whose insistence on remaining apart has led to an unparalleled chain of persecutions, unpleasant incidents, and general embarrassments for all concerned.

In the final analysis, however, the Jews are convinced that the situation is basically not of their own making and may well be beyond their control; that inherent in this perplexing social problem lies the ultimate answer to Judaism in America. It consists in a choice between Judaism continuing in its historic enterprise or undertaking to liquidate itself and shut up shop.

Be that as it may, the far reaching results of this lack of status and of a concrete system of meanings and values internally consistent and widely held and practiced is that among many members of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community today may be found that condition known as *anomie,*[81] or loss of orientation, "a mental tension which in its moderate type reveals an intermittent apprehension in the adult of a danger before which he is helpless and which, in its severe type mounts to an anxiety fraught with terrifying images of a menacing world."[82] The vacuum thus left in the social system known as the Jewish community promises to be filled in the near future by some new ideology.

Thus it is that at present the "ideal-typical" Jewish community appears to be in a period of transition from the old forms of social organizations, unique traditions, and well defined ideals that have in force, with only insignificant changes, for many centuries, to a new way of life. It is this very transition which seems responsible for the dilemma in which the Jews find themselves.

NOTES

1. For a comprehensive review and analysis of the numerous definitions of the concept "community," see George A. Hillery, Jr., "The Presence of Community Among Urban Negroes: A Case Study of a Selected Area in New Orleans," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1951), pp. 9-19, 232-254.

2. R. M. MacIver and Charles H. Page, *Society: An Introductory Analysis* (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1949).

3. Carle C. Zimmerman, *The Changing Community* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938).

4. August B. Hollingshead, "Community Research: Development and Present Conditions," *American Sociological Review*, XIII (1948).

5. MacIver and Page, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 281.

8. MacIver's point of view provided helpful orientation for this study as the Jewish community seems to fall most closely within this frame of reference.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

10. Hollingshead, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

12. *Loc. cit.*

13. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

17. Salo W. Baron, *The Jewish Community* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1945), p. VII.

18. See R. M. MacIver and C. H. Page, *Society: An Introductory Analysis* (New York, Rinehart and Co., 1949), pp. 281-309.

19. See Trude W. Rosmarin, *Jewish Survival* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949), pp. 164-165, who says: "Many definitions of "Judaism" have been advanced. "Judaism as a religion," "Judaism as a nationality," "Judaism as a civilization," "Judaism as ethical monotheism" are just a few of the catch-phrases denoting varieties of Jewish introspection. As a matter of fact, Judaism warrants all of these and some additional definitions: It is "religion," "nationality," "civilization," and "ethics." Above all, however, it is a way of life and its constitution. Judaism encompasses life as a totality. It supplies an all-comprehensive regimen and philosophy. It orders the most trivial as well as the most important events. It blends religion, national devotion, cultural aspirations, and the hope for a better future into an inseparable union of purposeful holiness. Judaism is a system of religious culture and cultural religion which most closely approximates the highest ideal of "humanism." It infuses its followers with

the assurance of the meaningfulness of life by answering the questions "whence?", "whither?", "why?". Like philosophy on the highest plane, Judaism answers these eternal questions of mankind in a manner which stresses the "whither" — the goal and the purpose — thus identifying and aligning itself with the future. Through all the great books of Judaism there runs the conviction that the problems of the origin of the world, even of God, are less important than the challenges presented by the purpose of the world and the meaning of life."

20. At this point it is important that a definition of the term Jew be given. A survey of the definitions given to this term indicates a great variety of opinions. For the purpose of this study the very general definition as given by Louis Wirth will be used. He stated in "A Radio Discussion of the Jews," *Round Table* (University of Chicago, January 28, 1940), p. 5: ". . . it is my impression from the study of this problem that we cannot really define a Jew except to say that a Jew is a person who thinks of himself as a Jew and who is treated by others as if he were a Jew."

21. Rosmarin, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

22. Everett V. Stonequist in an essay published in Isacque Graeber and Steuart H. Britt (eds.), *Jews in a Gentile World* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942), p. 303, makes the following observation: "Lacking a common territorial basis, a common language, and a sovereign state; varying greatly in physical type, in religion and in culture, the historic persistence of the Jewish group seems to be a sociological miracle."

23. Sabastian DeGrazia, *The Political Community* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. iv.

24. Henric F. Infield, "The Concept of Jewish Culture and the State of Israel," *American Sociological Review,* XVI (1951), p. 507.

25. Trude W. Rosmarin, *op. cit.*, p, 27, 69.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 32

27. Milton Steinberg, *A Partisan Guide to the Jewish Problem* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co, 1945), pp. 148-153.

28. Mark Zborowski, "The Children of the Covenant," *Social Forces,* XXIX (1951), p. 351.

29. Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.*, pp. 240.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 251.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 252.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 252.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

34. *Op. cit.* See also Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1951).

35. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

36. Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," *The American Journal of Sociology,* LII (1947), pp. 293-308.

37. Salo W. Baron, *The Jewish Community* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1945), *passim,* explains that the survival of the Jews in the ghetto like atmosphere was due to the amazing vitality of their community life. He points out further that the "enlightenment" and "emancipation" disintegrated those communities and that whatever cohesion there remains in the Jewish community of today is due to the vestiges of that communal life which remain.

38. Mordecai M. Kaplan, *The Future of the American Jew* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1948), p. XV.

39. Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.,* p. 102. Parsons explains that the most important single source for his discourse on the Jewish people which is included in his essay *The Sociology of Modern Anti-Semitism* is Max Weber's study: *Das Antike Judentum in Gesammelte Aufsatze zur Religious-sociologie,* Vol. III.

40. There is a section in the Talmud where God is imagined to exclaim: "I would rather you forgot me than my Law."

41. The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: 10 vols., 1941), Vol. 3, pp. 629-632.

42. Louis Wirth, "Education for Survival," *The American Journal of Sociology,* XLVIII (1943), p. 682.

43. Sidney E. Goldstein, *The Meaning of Marriage and the Foundation of the Family* (New York: Block Publishing Co., 1942), p. 154.

44. *Ibid.,* p. 154.

45. Albert Einstein, *The World as I See it* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), p. 99. It is interesting to note that previous to his experience with the Nazi, Einstein had in no way identified himself with things Jewish. He has since 1940 become an ardent Zionist.

46. Steinberg, *op. cit.,* p. 119.

47. In studying the pre-emancipation Jewish community one is struck forcefully with the resemblance of this communal structure to that referred to as the "Gemeinschaft situation" by Ferdinand Tonnies in his book *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft.*

48. Isaac B. Berkson, *Theories of Americanization* (New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1920), p. 96.

49. Jessie Bernard, "Biculturality: A Study in Social Schizophrenia," an essay in Graeber and Britt (eds.) *Jews in a Gentile World* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942), pp. 264-65.

50. Everett V. Stonequist, "The Marginal Character of the Jews," an essay in Graeber and Britt (eds.) *Jews in a Gentile World* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942), pp. 303-07.

51. C. E. Gehlke, *Emile Durkheim's Contributions to Sociological Theory,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1915), p. 17.

52. Talcott Parsons, *The Sociology of Modern Anti-Semitism,* an essay in Graeber and Britt (eds.) *Jews in a Gentile World.*

53. H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 59-60.

54. See R. M. MacIver and C. H. Page, *Society: An Introductory Anaylsis* (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1949), p. 281.

See also Carle C. Zimmerman, *The Changing Community* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938), p. 29.

See also E. R. Park and E. W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925), p. 163.

55. Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

57. Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, p. 75

58. See Zimmerman's discussion "The Community as a Social Fact" in his book *The Changing Community*, p. 19, in which he explains that "social facts are manners of action, thinking, and feeling which are exterior to the individual and, at the same time, constrain the individual to the degree that they are imposed upon him."

59. See Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism.*

60. Albert I. Gordon, *Jews in Transition* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1949), p. 14.

61. An explanation of this phenomenon is given in a quotation from Leroy Beaulieu in *The Jews, Their History, Culture, and Religion*, p. 1186, where he points out that although Jews bring fewer children in the world they bring more of them to maturity.

Rosenquist and Friedman in their article on "Jewish Population Trends in the United States," *Social Research*, pp. 209-10, explain the lower birth-rate among Jews by pointing out that Jews participate to a larger extent than non-Jews in those occupations — professional, managerial, and business — which have been traditionally associated with low birth-rate and also that in their culture there is not strong religious or moral sanction regarding planned parenthood.

62. Rosenquist and Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

63. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

64. Nathan Glazer, "What Sociology Knows about American Jews," *Commentary*, (March, 1950), p. 284.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 280.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 280-82.

67. Nathan Goldberg, *Occupational Patterns of American Jewry* (New York: J. T. S. P. University Press, 1947), p. 42.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

71. *Loc. cit.*

72. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

73. Finkelstein, *op. cit.*, p. 1282.

74. M. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 59. See also Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929), p. 479, wherein the authors in discussing the group solidarity of that com-

munity note that the Jews there are accepted socially with just enough qualifications to make them aware that they do not entirely belong.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

76. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-09.

77. Here once more is revealed W. I. Thomas' classic "theorem." "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." Merton, Robert K., *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glenco, Illinois: The Free Press) p. 179.

78. See the interesting essay on this topic in *Resolving Social Conflicts* by Kurt Lewin (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948).

79. M. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

80. Sholem Asch makes the cause of anti-Jewish feeling clear when he says in his book *One Destiny* (New York: J. P. Putnam's Sons, 1941), p. 39, "What is the basic cause of anti-Semitism? The first and most important reason for hatred of Jews is the separate faith which has isolated them. All other reasons, both economic and political, are a rationalization of this first cause, because the adherence of Jews to a belief different from that of the rest of the population has served to make them regarded throughout all generations as intruders. No matter how long Jews live in a certain place — they might have been among the founders of the city, among the earliest builders and inhabitants of it — they were still regarded as foreigners and trespassers. . ."

See also Campbell's report in Theodore M. Newcomb *Social Psychology* (New York: The Dryden Press, 1950), pp. 192-93, which indicates that a survey made of anti-Semitism among a national sample of adults shows that those who are most dissatisfied individuals are most anti-Semitic while those who are least anti-Semitic are most satisfied individuals.

81. DeGrazia, *op. cit.*, p. XI.

82. See also I. S. Wechsler, *The Neurologists' Point of View* (New York: L. B. Fischer, 1941), pp. 15-16.

Dr. Wechsler, an M.D., is Clinical Professor of Neurology, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University; Chief Neurologist at the Mt. Sinai Hospital; Deputy Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem and President of the Board of Directors of the American Friends of the Hebrew University. Dr. Wechsler, in discussing the wide prevalence of the neuroses among Jews, points out that there must be something in their character or mental makeup which makes life, on occasion, too difficult to handle or, in psychologic terms, conditions their sensitiveness to the problems of reality. It is his opinion that Jews, possibly as the result of their religious and cultural experience, have developed a peculiar philosophy of life, a *Weltanschauung* which has so profoundly affected their adjustments to reality that the individual frequently reacts with a neurosis. See also the discussion regarding peoples' reaction to stress by Alexander H. Leighton in *The Governing of Men* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 263.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Clinton Community

Setting

East Feliciana, one of the "Florida Parishes," is located in the east central portion of Louisiana. The Spanish name, Feliciana, meaning happyland, was given to the parish by Governor Galvez of Louisiana in honor of his wife.[1]

At one time, East Feliciana Parish and West Feliciana were included in the same territory. However, the citizens of the western part of the parish complained to the state government that the floods and quicksands of Thompson Creek, separating them from Jackson, the parish seat of Feliciana, often resulted in hardships. During the second session of the sixth legislature, 1824, an act was passed abolishing the parish of Feliciana and creating the two distinct parishes of East and West Feliciana.[2]

Jackson was to remain the parish seat until further provision was made by the legislature for a new site. Originally, Jackson had been called "Buncombe." However, after General Jackson camped there on his way to Tennessee from the battle of New Orleans, the name was changed in his honor.[3]

In 1830 the parish seat was moved to Clinton because it was situated in the center of the parish. John Bostwick and George Sebor were the actual founders of Clinton. It is said that the particular site was selected because of its abundance of clear spring water, favorable altitude, and general healthfulness of the climate. One of the most imposing structures in the state at that time was the court house erected at the cost of $27,000.[4]

We find the following interesting and very significant statement in the Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana, published in 1892:

> East Feliciana has been called 'the parish of churches and schools,' a satisfactory reason for which is found in the deep religious feeling existing throughout the entire parish, and in the number and excellence of the educational institutions. (The first school to be established was a private institution called Clinton Academy in 1826. In charge of it was M. C. Wade.)[5]
>
> Clinton Female Academy was founded in 1832 by the sisters of the famous historian, George Bancroft. The next school established was Centenary College of Louisiana, which owes its title to the date of its origin in 1839, the one hundredth year after the formation of the first Methodist society. It was first located at Clinton, Mississippi, but moved to Jackson, Louisiana, in 1845. Feliciana Female Institution bears the distinction of being the oldest chartered female institute in the state, having been chartered in 1859. Silliman Female College was established in 1852. The object of its founder, William Silliman, is said to have been 'to give to the public an institution of learning to which all may send their children without interfering with the religious prejudices of any.' Millwood Female Institute of Jackson began its career in 1866 as a small private school, but it grew so that in 1870 it was regularly chartered by the state.
>
> The first church (denomination not given) to be organized in this area was in 1812 at Hepsiba. The next of which there is a record was the Baptist, at Clinton in 1836 with seven members. There are four other Baptist churches in the parish. The Methodist church was organized between 1835-1840. There are five Presbyterian churches in the parish having 175 members in charge of two ministers. The Catholics have two churches in the parish. (It is important to note that this historical sketch makes no mention of Jews in the parish. It is well known that by 1892 there must have been over 150 Jews in the parish.)

> Clinton has long enjoyed a reputation for great commercial activity, a reputation well sustained. One manufacturing company, the Clinton Brick and Tile Company, was organized in 1891. (This company went out of business fifteen years later.) The Clinton and Port Hudson railroad was completed in 1840. A branch was built from Midway to Jackson where a bank was established and the business of the road conducted. The road was kept running until the war.[6]

The first newspaper in East Feliciana was the *Patriot-Democrat,* published in 1871. The *Mirror,* an eight-page paper was published in 1886 by E. A. Miller. The *Southern Watchman* was published in Clinton, 1887, by W. W. Wall and T. M. Green, and is still in existence.[7]

To date the above is the only official record to be located covering the history of this area. In order to bring the historical sketch as much as possible to the present day, it is necessary to reconstruct it from personal records, from census and agricultural reports and from newspaper clippings.[8]

It appears from all accounts that in the period between 1890 and 1900 this area was most prosperous from the point of view of population growth, income, cultural achievement and general well-being. In that decade can be found the largest number of farms, the greatest estimated value of farm products, the largest area planted in cotton, the greatest number of bales of cotton produced, and a population of over 1,000. (In 1940 the population was 958.) One finds also the greatest number of stores and other businesses flourishing. At that time most of the educational institutions were functioning and a large number of churches of all denominations were still active. To be found also were an unusual number of outstanding lawyers living and practicing in the area.

With the turn of the century, however, a general depression seems to have closed in on this area. Crops began to fail; the production of cotton fell; business began to decline; the "famous" brick factory burned and was not rebuilt; several of the schools closed their doors; families began to move away.

In 1907 came the complete collapse of cotton production. The boll weevil and man-made erosion had done a thorough job. Waves of pessimism began to sweep over the area. By 1910 the entire Jewish group had left the community. (They had begun to arrive there in 1845.) Silliman College was planning to close its doors, and Centenary College was planning to move to Shreveport, Louisiana. Business became even worse and the population dropped to below the 800 mark. The value of farm land dropped and the total production in bales of cotton dropped from 22,000 in 1900 to 5,000. By 1920 the population had dropped to 700 persons: production in bales of cotton to 4,000. Much of the farm land had become useless because of erosion, and business in general was very poor. Many churches closed their doors, and by 1930 the only schools left in the parish were the public schools.

By 1946 the population had risen to 998, but the total production in bales of cotton was 910. In the interim, efforts were being made at reclamation of the farm area, but with little success, due in part to the poor conditions of the soil and in part to lack of interest. However, new programs were being developed which are at present showing progress. These have been the cattle industry, the lumber industry, and some dairying.

Today Clinton is a community which does not appear to be very active. One finds there many educated and cultured citizens, yet there is none of the spirit, solidarity, wealth, and cultural interests which one found there in the period between 1880-1900.

Col. W. F. Kernan, whose grandfather came to Clinton in 1840 and whose family has lived there "in and out" during the last century, sums up very aptly the picture of Clinton today by saying that the "community is dying from a disease known as 'ancestoritis.' "[9]

The Jewish Community in Clinton

One might visualize the occasion when the first Jewish persons arrived in Clinton.[10] According to information gathered from cemetery inscriptions the earliest Jewish settlers in Clinton were Henry Oppenheimer and his wife, Minna, who arrived

there approximately in 1845.[11] This is certain, when they reached Clinton they found a small but growing community. There was a new and beautiful courthouse surrounded by many frame buildings used as country stores, saloons, and law offices. Surrounding this core of activity were scattered a number of dwellings, and beyond the community proper, as far as the eye could reach, appeared fertile country with farmsteads. Here, they must have thought, is the place to settle, to plant roots deeply, to live in peace, and here to earn a living as free people. Here, the Oppenheimers had heard were no Judengassen, here were no anti-Jewish signs which both Minna and Henry had seen displayed in many places in Hanover.[12] Here were opportunities to buy land, to build homes, to worship, and to trade with people in a dignified way. Here, at last, was a partial answer to the prayer which every Jew in the Diaspora uttered at the completion of the Passover services each year: "Next year we shall meet in Israel."

The People. It is practically impossible to give a demographic picture of the Jewish group during its existence in Clinton, as there are no records available covering such facts. It is known[13] that a number of Jews, individually and in families, immediately followed the Henry Oppenheimers[14] to this community. The following partial list[15] is most significant because it indicates the extent of Jewish immigration to Clinton within a period of several years after the Oppenheimers arrived, who, it is assumed, must have done so about 1845: Israel and Caroline Adler, Solomon Adler, Clara Stein, Moses Bloom, I. Mayer, Abraham Levy, Yette Oppenheimer (sister of Henry), Solomon Kern, Lewis Meyer, Emanuel Dryfus, Leonard Wolf, and Jacob Wolf.

The 1900 United States Census gives the following pertinent population information. There were in Clinton in 1900, 960 persons; of these, 329 were foreign-born white; 157 were born in the United States of parents who came from Germany, 10 were direct from Russia, 10 from Austria, and 20 from France. The religious affiliations of these individuals is not known, but it is logical to believe by far the largest majority of the foreign born and second generation foreign born were of Jewish faith.

It would appear that the most feasible method of presenting a picture of the Jewish community of Clinton is to consider a segment of it in terms of time. That is to say, consider a static portion of it as it existed in 1890. This particular period is chosen because the best information available covers this period, which, consequently, makes it the most workable and meaningful segment.[16]

The following is a list of the Jewish persons living in Clinton around 1890. It is not possible to give the ages of the individuals, but it can be said that the great majority of them were over 18.

Emanuel and Sonchie Meyer, who had the following children: Henry, Matilda, David, Morris, Celeste, and Joe.

Henry (brother of Emanuel) and Celeste (Moses) Meyer, who had the following children: Emanuel, Maude, Alphonse, Gus, and Carl.

Isadore and Debora (Moses) Mayer, who had the following children: Carl, Carol, and Daniel.

Henry and Celeste (Meyer) Mayer, who had the following children: Genette, Naomi, Edwin, Claud.

Simon and Gertrude (Moses) Mayer, who had the following children: Tessie and Cragen.

Joe and Ernestine Israel, who had the following children: Leon, Ernestine, Sam, Hortense, Achille, Theo, Crimeo.

Sam Adler, whose children were: Sam, Eugene, Louis, Julius, Adolph, Bertrand, Isadore, Oscar, and Edward.

Eugene Worms.

Ike and Meline (Oppenheimer) Heyman, who had the following children: Seraphine, Henry, Ben, Bernice, Annette, Flora, and Wilbert.

Jonah and Maude (Meyer) Levy, whose children were Edgar and Sadie.

Abraham Levy.

A couple by the name of Karow.

Joseph and Julia (Heyman) Black, whose children were Ike, Adolph, Melina, Leon, Gertrude, and Ferdinand.

It can be seen, thus, that at least 85 persons of Jewish faith resided in Clinton in 1890. It is significant to note also that at this time there were quite a number of Jews living in nearby communities: Jackson, Ethel, Wilson, The Plains, Slaughter, who were in a sense a part of the Clinton community.

Occupation and Economic Structure. By and large, the Jewish people of Clinton were in business dealing in general merchandise and buying and selling cotton. In the span 1890-1900 the very heart of the Clinton economy was based on cotton production. In 1900 cotton production in the parish was nearly at its highest, (over 20,000 bales), and the estimated value of farm produce was approximately $1,000,000. The Jewish merchants had built a number of large and up-to-date stores and were considered very successful. They were accepted as important members of the business community as well as the general community. They did a large credit business, particularly with farmers and land owners. Their stores contained a most varied assortment of goods and were very popular with local, as well as parish-wide buyers.[17]

During the year some of the Jews had been able to accumulate farm land, but in no case did any one of them ever assume the responsibility of farming the land.

Apparently in 1890-1900 it had not yet come to the attention of the community leaders, or if it did come to their attention, they refused to take serious cognizance of it, that their basic source of income, cotton production, was about to bring down upon them catastrophic economic disaster. The actual crash came in 1907 and by 1910 the total production in cotton was 5,374 bales. The basic reason for this disastrous situation was plainly poor farming practices resulting in soil deterioration and large scale erosion. The climax came when the boll weevil made its entrance in 1907.[18]

No sooner had the depression descended upon Clinton when the Jewish merchants began to leave the community. They sold their stores, merchandise, and other holdings and moved to other localities. However, most of them moved to Baton Rouge, to New Orleans, and to many smaller communities in Louisiana and Mississippi.

The possibility exists that there is some correlation between soil erosion and the determination of the economic life of any community, and it was particularly true in Clinton. In the case of the Jewish group, this situation had special significance, but it must be emphasized that one should not be too hasty in assuming that the economic breakdown was the sole factor, albeit, it was the major factor, in the disintegration of the Jewish community in Clinton. It is the consensus of many of the residents of Clinton, Jews and non-Jews alike, that there were many other important factors contributing to the picture in Clinton, both in its creation and its disintegration.

Many of the individuals interviewed stated that the Jews gravitated to Clinton because it had a reputation of being a very progressive community, not only in matters pertaining to the economic life but to the cultural as well. It was known throughout the state as a center of legal activities, and as a community of many schools and churches, and as a locality interested in things intellectual. It was also recognized as an area of extended tolerance to outsiders. On the other hand, it is very significant to note that it was further explained that the Jewish group disintegrated and disappeared because with the coming of the economic crisis there were simply no other roots to hold them there, none of those intangible yet meaningful elements which tie individuals to a place and hold them there for a lifetime.

Social Life. It appears from all available evidence that from the very beginning, the Jewish people appeared to be a well-integrated part of the total community. They built attractive homes and stores, they planted gardens, and took part in all civic activities. In general, they were not considered as foreigners by the natives. They threw themselves wholeheartedly and generously into the task of building the general community. They quickly became conditioned to the Clinton way of life. They were neither the richest members of the community nor the poorest. As a matter of fact, Clinton in the 1890-1900 decade did not have very many rich people nor very many poor ones, except, of course, its Negro citizens, who were very poor.

Contrary to the conditions existing in many other Jewish communities, the Clinton Jews did not organize any Jewish fraternal organizations nor any German lodges. Their apparent attachment was for typically American organizations and institutions. They mingled freely and enthusiastically with others in business affairs, in recreation, and in politics. At one time there were six Jewish members of the Clinton Masonic Lodge. Isadore Mayer[19] and Jonah Levy[20] were both Masters of that lodge. In 1905 Jonah Levy was elected Mayor of Clinton and served for a term.[21]

The young Jewish people attended the local schools and colleges and were considered in every sense members of the over-all community. Louis Levy, grandfather of Henry Louis Cohn of Baton Rouge, was one of the first graduates from Centenary College (1881). Many of the young women attended Silliman College[22] and participated in all school activities. Many of the young people attended Christian churches with their friends and took part in the services.[23] This seems to have been the case where the Jewish young ladies attended the Feliciana Female College.[24]

There does not appear to have been much monotony in the lives of the young people in Clinton. Parties were held at the homes of the Jewish children as well as those of the non-Jewish children and all were attended by both groups. Jewish young people dated non-Jews. However, it is important to note that there were only two cases of intermarriage before 1900. Oscar and Edward Adler married non-Jewish girls. It was mainly after the Jews left Clinton that many of them married out of their faith.

In their respective homes the Jewish daughters were taught the usual arts of upper class families. They played music, read books, but not Jewish literature, helped with housekeeping, etc. It was the opinion of many of those interviewed that, in general, no one seemed to lack stimulating leisure time activities, despite the fact that travel was very difficult because of poor roads. In fact, it was actually an ordeal to go to Baton Rouge, only about thirty miles away.

It is evident, however, that from the beginning there was little cooperative effort made at establishing a closely-knit Jewish group. Never in the history of the community were there any serious efforts made at building a house of worship or at formally organizing a congregation. The group in Clinton did not even organize a cemetery association until 1917, and this, of course, obviously by ex-Clinton Jews, who now lived elsewhere but were still interested in the cemetery. They did, however, establish their own cemetery about 1850.[25]

The institution of religion as those Jews knew it in Europe very swiftly moved away from the traditional pattern and tended to adapt itself more and more to the exigencies of its new environment. The abandonment of many of the religious practices by the Jews of Clinton can be looked upon only as the result of conditions unfavorable to their maintenance. The Jews of Clinton could not, for instance, observe the Sabbath because it didn't coincide with that of the dominant group. They could not, for the same reason, observe a host of other important practices; they therefore gave them up quickly. In the light of events one cannot escape the belief that religion as an institution practically ceased to be a force in the life of that Jewish community, at least while it remained in Clinton.

The group met as a unit, and this only rarely, at religious services on the high holy days,[26] in the public school building. Otherwise, there seems to have been little, if any, effort at participating in particularly Jewish activities. The group in general did not observe the Jewish dietary laws, and very few individuals knew anything at all of the orthodox traditions and customs.[27] Most of the Jews in Clinton who had come from abroad were lacking in Jewish knowledge, and conditions in Clinton were hardly favorable to a renascence. For most of the Jews in and about Clinton, Jewish living became the observance of a very limited ritual and charitable gifts to Jewish causes.[28]

It becomes clear, then, that the Jews in Clinton kept their Jewish identity as individuals, but as a group, there was very little indication of Jewish life and activity.

It was the consensus of all who were contacted, Jews and non-Jews alike, that the Jews as individuals all made some con-

tribution to the total community; however, they were seldom looked upon as a group different in any sense from the general community. It may be of value to add at this point that several of the non-Jews explained that the community in general felt very bitter when the Jews left at the time the community was suffering such serious economic difficulties.

Nevertheless, it was agreed that the Jewish business men were progressive in their business activities, that they helped in many ways to bring economic prosperity to the community, and that they were instrumental in building up the cultural level of the entire community with their financial contributions and their interest and personal effort.

Leon Israel contributed $1,000 to help establish a community library. In appreciation of this, the library board established an Ernestine Israel room in the library in memory of his daughter. Today the library has declined until it is practically useless, although the Clinton community makes some effort to keep it active.

Even after the Jews left Clinton, financial contributions continued to be made for many years. Leon Israel sent in a great number of blooded cattle and hogs in an effort to help the community develop this new industry, and Ernestine Israel continued to contribute to the upkeep of the library.

The Jews in Clinton were proud, too, of their part in the war between the states. The muster role of the 4th Louisiana Regiment dated May 21, 1861, in the possession of Judge H. H. Kilbourne, indicates that three Jews from Clinton served with it: B. Moses, Chas. Wolf, and A. Mayer.

The Jews, on the other hand, all agreed that they had gained immeasurably from the Clinton community, but only as individuals. In no way did they experience group unity and group solidarity. As individuals, they found here freedom of opportunity for economic endeavor, here were many good schools for their children, which accepted them without question. Here the Jews were able to rear large families and to give those families the things which make for a good life. The good life, which in turn, enabled these children to become lawyers, physicians, merchants, manufacturers, teachers, and politicians,

so that today these same children walk side by side with those who had preceded them by many generations, everywhere sharing in the American way of life.

Here were found political freedom and religious freedom. Surely those were the things for which the immigrant came to America, to Louisiana, and to Clinton.

Indeed, the Jews in Clinton felt well pleased with their lives in that community until the year 1907.

NOTES

1. *East Feliciana Parish*, unpublished material on file with the Department of Archives, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Clinton School Papers*, 1826-1829, on file with the Department of Archives, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

6. *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana* (Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1892), I, pp. 234-235.

7. *East Feliciana Parish, op. cit.*

8. Also from interviews with the following persons: Mrs. Anna Irvin, Secretary, East Feliciana Chapter, American Red Cross, Clinton, Louisiana; Col. W. F. Kernan, author and lecturer, Clinton, Louisiana; Mrs. Mamie Record, ninety years of age, resident of Clinton; Mr. Otto Breitung, seventy years of age, resident of Clinton; Judge H. H. Kilbourne, seventy-five years of age, Clinton; Mrs. Phillip Jones, eighty-six years of age, formerly of Jackson and now residing in Baton Rouge; Mrs. Gertrude Labe, seventy-seven years of age, formerly of Clinton, now residing in Thibodaux, Louisiana; Mr. Edgar Levy, formerly of Jackson, now residing in Baton Rouge; Mr. Henry Louis Cohn, formerly of Clinton and now residing in Baton Rouge; Mrs. Laz Blum, sixty-six years of age, formerly of The Plains near Clinton, and a resident of Baton Rouge. Also utilized were the following: U. S. Census Records, reports prepared by the Louisiana Agricultural Extension Service, and newspaper accounts written and published by H. Skipwith, who moved to Clinton in 1825.

9. Colonel Kernan has retired from military life and is now residing in Clinton (1950).

10. The picture which follows is necessarily a composite one. While basically it is constructed on facts gathered from many sources, it has been necessary to interject at various points a dash of "imagination." Because the community being investigated has been out of existence for nearly forty years, the writer found himself compelled to lay the foundation as well as to build the structure. It has been necessary to discover general tendencies in apparently unrelated happenings in widely

separated places; to piece together isolated episodes and factual material so as to form something of a coherent picture, and, in a word, to transform these episodes and this material into an understanding and meaningful scene.

11. In all probability, the writer is mistaken in his speculations. Dr. Jacob R. Marcus, Professor of Jewish History at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and Director of the American Jewish Archives, once explained to the writer, half in jest and all in earnest, that there is a law in Jewish history to the effect that "No Jew is ever the first one in any community because there was surely one there before him."

12. Luis Wirth, *The Ghetto* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 44.

13. This information available through conversations with aged residents of Clinton and from studying inscriptions on tombstones in the Jewish cemetery of Clinton.

14. The Oppenheimers subsequently moved to Jackson, where a son, William, was born to them on September 26, 1847. William Oppenheimer moved to Houston in later years and died in 1872. His body was returned to Clinton for burial.

15. From information found on headstones in Jewish cemetery in Clinton. A total list of persons buried here may be found in Appendix A.

16. This reconstruction made available after conversations with Mrs. Gertrude Labe, of Thibodaux; Mrs. Mamie Record, of Clinton; Mr. Edgar Levy, of Baton Rouge; Mrs. Sara Schlottderbeck, of Baton Rouge; Mr. Henry Lewis Cohn, of Baton Rouge; Mr. Otto Breitung, of Clinton; and material available in "Sketches of the Pioneers," in G. H. Skipwith, *East Feliciana, Past and Present* (New Orleans: Hopkins Printing Office, 1892).

17. In the collection of papers of James M. Andrews, 1846-1899, on file in the Department of Archives, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is a statement from the store of Joseph Israel. The information at the heading of the statement is as follows: Date, November 1, 1883, Bought of Joseph Israel, Dealer in Dry Goods, Clothing, Boots and Shoes, Groceries, Hardware, etc. Cash paid for Cotton, Wool, and all country produce.

18. From a conversation with Mr. L. A. Mullens, Louisiana State Department of Commerce and Agriculture, Louisiana State University campus.

19. According to Mr. Otto Breitung, of Clinton.

20. According to Mr. Edgar Levy, son of Jonah Levy, of Baton Rouge.

21. The issue in that particular mayor's campaign was the perennial Louisiana problem: the "stock law." Mr. Levy believed that a growing and progressive community such as Clinton should not have stock running around on the main street.

22. Mr. Joe Israel deeded his home to Silliman College. The home is still standing and is now being used as a nurses' home. A photograph of this home may be seen in Figure 5.

23. Mrs. Laz Blum, of 1403 Convention Street, Baton Rouge, explains that although her family lived at The Plains, Louisiana, she boarded at Silliman College, went to prayer service there, and played the piano and attended the Presbyterian Church in the community. It seemed to her a natural thing to do, since there was no Synagogue available. While at Silliman, she was friendly with a number of the Jewish girls from Clinton. Mrs. Gertrude Labe of Thibodaux, made a similar observation about this.

24. Mrs. Phillip Jones, Baton Rouge, explains that while she was at this school there were at least four Jewish girls there. Also, that of the six teachers in the institution, one was Jewish. She taught music. Mrs. Jones was of the opinion that there were no feelings of any kind against the Jewish students and that they were accepted in the same manner as all other students.

25. *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Louisiana, op. cit.*, p. 125. "CLINTON LOUISIANA HEBREW ASSOCIATION, 1917 —, New Orleans, Orleans Parish. Incorporation papers of the Clinton Louisiana Hebrew Association were taken out in Orleans Parish on May 30, 1917 by a group of Jewish residents headed by Albert J. Wolf, President, and Jerome Hirsch, Secretary. The object set forth was maintenance of the Jewish cemetery in Clinton, East Feliciana Parish. In 1904, while serving Temple Sinai at St. Francisville, Rabbi Raisin established fortnightly services for Clinton Jews. Several years prior to the formation of the Clinton Louisiana Hebrew Association, all Jewish residents had moved from Clinton. No records were found."

26. Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, New Year's Day and Day of Atonement.

27. Mrs. Labe tells the story that when a non-Jewish friend of her father's chided him about eating ham while the early Hebrews did not, he explained that the real reason the old time Jews did not eat ham was that in those days there was no such thing as "sugar cured" ham.

28. In contrast with the Clinton community, one finds that the much smaller Jewish group in St. Francisville, only about thirty-five miles away, established a congregation in 1892, built a temple in 1902, and had a full-time rabbi for a year. An article in the New Orleans *Jewish Ledger* (November 25, 1904), p. 16, Col. 2, makes the following statement regarding St. Francisville: "The affairs of congregation Temple Sinai are in a most satisfactory condition and our Sabbath School, in particular, is flourishing. Both of these institutions are under the able Rabbi Raisin. Our Rabbi has also established a circuit service at Clinton, Louisiana, where he officiates every alternate Sunday." The congregation dissolved in January, 1905, because of a dwindling membership.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Opelousas Community

Background of the Jewish Community

In the early 1850's there came to Opelousas from Paris, France, a colorful man in his early twenties who became one of the most prominent and successful citizens in the general community and for many years the most important figure in the Jewish community. His name was Samuel Blake.[1] His principal occupations were farming and merchandising, and he proved to be most adept at both. During the Civil War, Blake enlisted in Company K, Third Louisiana Cavalry Regiment, of which company he soon became captain. In 1861 he married Miss Mary Kane, and five children were born to them: Tom A., Bessie (who subsequently married a cousin of hers, the son of her father's brother, who came along with Sam), William, George, and Horace. These offspring were in their own time as prominent and successful as their illustrious father.

Samuel Blake served thirteen consecutive years as a member of the Police Jury from his ward and participated most earnestly in all political and social activities of that section of Louisiana.

Other Jews followed the Blake brothers to the Opelousas area. The two newspapers published in Opelousas in the 1850's carried advertisements regarding Jewish business firms.[2]

The Opelousas Courier,[3] dated December, 1854 carried the following advertisement:

A. Schwartz — S. Kaufman.
The undersigned formed a partnership since 1 July 1854 under name of Schwartz and Kaufman for sale of dry goods,

ready made clothing, hardware, etc. . . They have already on hand the following articles for plantations . . . Ready made clothing for Negroes.

The Opelousas Courier, dated May 15, 1858 carried this statement: ". . . at S. Block's, corner Main and North St. large stock of: Groceries, Cookery, Tin and Hardware, Choice Liquors of all Descriptions. . ."

The Opelousas Courier, dated April 13, 1861 advised that: "James D. Israel was elected to the Board of Police."

The Opelousas Patriot, dated July 2, 1859, carried this information: "Mammoth Clothing Store. Summer clothing. Pants, Coats, Vests. Gent's Furnishing Goods. . . Fernberg and Kaufman."

The Opelousas Courier, dated March 24, 1860, contained this advertisement: "Joseph Haas, Taylor, offers his services to the citizens of Opelousas and vicinity. He feels confident that he can satisfy all tastes in cutting and making."

Le Courier Des Opelousas, dated January 18, 1862, carried this statement in French:[4] "Jacob and Emile Hirsch. The undersigned having formed a partnership for the purpose of opening a store in Leonville will sell for moderate prices. . ."

Perrin, in giving a biographical sketch of Joseph Block,[5] an early settler in Opelousas, points out that he came to Opelousas in 1860. Subsequently, he served as President of the Parish School Board and contributed much to the improvement of the public school system. He was a prominent man and served as Master of his lodge at one time. He was also a member of the American Legion of Honor, and the B'nai B'rith. Block married Bertha Kaufman, who was from New Orleans, in December of 1865. The Blocks were parents of six children: Albert J., Eugene S., Julia, Edgar H., Lucille, and Percy Argail.

Another personality of interest in this survey described by Perrin[6] is Alphonse Levy, who came to Opelousas from France in the 1860's. In 1877 he became a partner in a mercantile business with Julian Meyer.[7] This firm was one of the largest business houses in the state. "Recognizing the necessity of a healthy Southern immigration," Mr. Levy became connected with

the Southwestern Land Company, of which he was elected President. Because of this company and its enterprising members hundreds of home seekers have located in Southwest Louisiana. Mr. Levy became president (in 1890) of the First National Bank of Opelousas. He was popular in social circles, a member of the Opelousas Social Club, and a member of the Masonic Lodge there.

In 1867 there came to Opelousas Solomon Loeb[8] and his wife, Jeannette (Marks). Loeb was born in Germany and had migrated originally to Woodville, Mississippi. During the Civil War he enlisted in the First Company of the Wilkinson Rifles, Sixteenth Mississippi Regiment, and at one time fought under Lee and Stonewall Jackson. The Loebs had seven children and, says Perrin, "Mr. Loeb is a thorough, progressive American citizen."

This foregoing appears sufficient to give a picture of the earliest Jewish migrants to the Opelousas community and their interests and activities.

Mr. Ben Jacobs, who was born in Opelousas in 1872, and is at present residing there, states that about 1870 there were approximately the following Jewish families residing in and nearby Opelousas: Phillips, Benjamin, Isaacs, Cline, Meyer, Block, Bernett, Tankel, Loeb, Levy, Fernberg, Blake, Pressburg, and Jacobs. He states, further, that he cannot recall the exact number of children in each family, but he is of the opinion that, as was usually the case among both Jews and non-Jews in those days, there were many children.

Mrs. Alexander Robertson,[9] born in Opelousas in 1875, and still residing there, is of the opinion that in 1885 the following Jewish families were living in and near Opelousas, and she recalls the number of children in those families: Cline, six children; Isaac, three children; Meyer, eleven children; Jacobs, nine children; Loeb, seven children; Block, six children; Fernberg. eight children; Blake, five children. The above lived in Opelousas; while in Washington, a settlement a few miles away, there were: The Wolffs, Leon with eight children and Carl with two children; Plonsky with two children; Jacobs with no children; and Klaus with nine children.

It appears thus that in 1885, there was a Jewish community within a radius of five miles of Opelousas of thirteen or more families and with over 100 persons.

Mrs. Celia Cortland, who migrated to Opelousas from the southern part of Russia in 1900 and has resided there since that time, recalls that in 1925 there were the following families in the Jewish community of Opelousas: Winsbergs with three sons, Cline with two sons and four daughters, Tom Blake with no children, Horace Blake with four sons, Jacobs with one daughter, Cortland with one son and three daughters, Siegel with three sons and three daughters, Pressburgs with one son and two daughters, Tankel with no children. In Washington there were the Klaus family with one son and eight daughters, Julian and Pat Wolff, unmarried, and Mr. Zetta Loeb with one daughter.

It is well to note that although there were in the Jewish community in 1925 fourteen family units, there were only eighty individuals.

Despite the fact that in the beginning the Opelousas community was not highly integrated as a religious group, its members did have many other interests in common. Most of them had migrated from French speaking areas in Europe so that they did possess some cultural traits in common with each other and with the native population and, of course, being in a sense outsiders proved a most cohesive factor among them. The greatest majority of the Opelousas Jews have always been in the general merchandising business and most of them have been owners. These businesses were, by and large, extensive and successful. However, it is worthy of note that merchandising was not the only occupation. Quite a few of the Jews were interested in agriculture which itself is a unique situation since Jews in America have rarely gone into that area of endeavor. Samuel Blake actually lived on a plantation near Opelousas. The Levys spent much time and effort in developing real estate. The Meyers owned and farmed large tracts of land. Solomon Loeb was as successful a farmer as he was a merchant. The Blakes who followed Samuel were medical doctors, dentists, bankers, and speculators in oil. Ben Jacobs published a newspaper for several years, operated a book shop for thirty-five years, and has been em-

ployed by the Opelousas Chamber of Commerce for many years. Leonce Cline has achieved national fame for his unique collection of antiques. Tom Blake was very active in the affairs of the St. Landry Bank and Trust Company, and was for many years its president.

It has been the consensus of both Jews and non-Jews in Opelousas that the Jewish business and professional men had contributed materially to the growth and progress of the general community through their economic and civic participation. The Jews in general were always considered stable citizens, who, once having migrated to Opelousas, remained to live out their lives. Often before reaching Opelousas they would pause in New Orleans or perhaps New York if they were migrating directly from Europe. However, after a sort of period of apprenticeship they settled down permantly in the Opelousas community. There was never what might be termed an invasion of Jews into Opelousas it was, rather, a slow but permanent infiltration. As mentioned before, they found here other French speaking inhabitants who were of similar economic status.

From earliest times the Jews of Opelousas played an important role in the activities of the local Masonic Lodge, many of them being members and many ultimately becoming officers of that Lodge.[10]

In 1865 the members of the Jewish community established their cemetery and in 1877 they organized a congregation: Gemuloth Chasadim,[11] and held services regularly in the Masonic Lodge Hall since there was not yet available a synagogue building of their own.[12] On the high holy days a student rabbi or one who had retired from active life, would be invited to hold services for the group. In 1920 the Jews of Opelousas organized a B'nai B'rith Lodge which was at first very active. In later years, however, it was only partially active and became at last defunct in 1940. In 1929 "Ten paying members (families) consisting of 65 souls"[13] pooled their resources and efforts and built a Temple in which services were held somewhat regularly until 1942 at which time it was closed.[14] As a matter of fact, there have been no religious services of any kind held there by the Jewish people since 1942. In 1932 a Sisterhood was organized

with the aid of several Jews from New Iberia. This organization functioned intermittently until it ceased to exist in 1942.

In the last thirty-five years the Jewish people in Opelousas saw their own culture and religious tradition slip away. Step by step they lost contact with the larger Jewish community. Their own leadership somehow did not suffice. Friction developed within the local group itself, and there seemed to be no leadership and guidance forthcoming from without. During this period there was a great deal of marriage outside of the faith or no marriage at all. In the last thirty years, for instance, there have been only two cases wherein a Jewish person married another Jewish person, while living in Opelousas. One of these ended in divorce and the other is a very recent one (Johnice Hirsch and David Weinstein). Sixteen others were intermarriages. It is important to note, at this point, the following unattached individuals in the present generation among the Jews in Opelousas: The three sons in the Winsberg family have remained unmarried; Leonce Cline, the only offspring of the Cline family still residing in Opelousas, is unmarried; the three daughters of Mrs. Cortland who live in Opelousas are unmarried; the two daughters of the Siegel family, who are in Opelousas, are not married; the five daughters of Mrs. Klaus, who live in Washington, are unmarried; Julian and Pat Wolff, who live in Washington are not married, and the second daughter of Mrs. Hirsch, who is still living in Opelousas, is yet unmarried.

It appears that a worthwhile effort to catch the reality of the nature and character of the changes occurring in the life of the Opelousas Jewish community could be made by studying excerpts from the realistic portrayal which one member of that community, Mrs. Martha Braden, gives of her own life cycle there. She, her sister, and her mother remained in New York City while the father wandered down into the deep South in search of a new home. He finally settled permanently in Opelousas. The father however, died soon after his arrival and left a small business. Nevertheless, his widow and both daughters decided to come to Opelousas to live. (The girls were eight and ten years of age.) This they did. They had been reared in a strictly orthodox atmosphere in New York, and their adjustment

was very difficult to what was now a Christian environment. Mrs. Braden told how her mother very early became bedeviled by doubts and uncertainties of the new life and suffered untold unhappiness. For the period of a year she refused to eat meat because she could not obtain Kosher meat. Furthermore, she refused to eat any place but at her own home. She made every effort to support her Jewish ideas and ideals in some tangible way. She did her best to follow the Jewish law – the thousand and one rules and regulations ordering every moment of one's private and communal life. She kept the Sabbath, she prayed daily, she kept several sets of dishes. As time passed, however, she became even more frustrated and unhappy as she faced the overwhelming pressures of the larger community culture as it subtlely and inevitably overcame her resistance to it. She was torn between conflicting loyalties, attractions, and demands. After several years the two daughters began to notice that their mother was adjusting more successfully, at least superficially. Over the years they saw how her whole Jewish ideological system was unraveling itself, layer after layer. First, she stopped trying to keep Kosher in her own home. Then she began to eat out, later to eat locally butchered meat, still later she began to do little things on the Sabbath, and finally to work on the Sabbath. Soon the daughters began to notice that Christian categories of thought were determining much of her behavior, and Christian terminology to creep into her speech. In a few years it became evident that the mother no longer possessed any of the rigid distinctivenesses, which had meant so much to her when she first arrived in Opelousas.

Mrs. Braden subsequently married a man who was himself from Eastern Europe and much steeped in orthodox tradition. Six children were born to them, five sons and one daughter. All attended religious services when they were available and all had access to such Jewish training as could be found in the community. However, Judaism as a religious philosophy had little realistic meaning to them and of Jewish tradition and culture in general they knew relatively little. As the children reached adulthood they all attended colleges, all married non-Jews (four married Catholics, one a Baptist and one a Christian Scientist),

all but one left Opelousas, and all are rearing their children as Christians.

Here is an example of the assimilation process at its best. In the space of 50 years, from grandparents to grandchildren, the process is complete. Mrs. Braden's grandchildren are culturally and intellectually separated from her far more profoundly than she herself is separated from her grandparents, who remained in a ghetto in Poland. Here is a case wherein the processes of cultural assimilation, operating without much hindrance, produced a virtually complete integration of a minority group with the majority culture, to the point of actual organic unification. The first generation assimilated the material culture of the larger community; the second generation with very little reminders of the past, took over the intellectual point of view and began to assimilate the moral emphasis of the outside group, and the third generation merged completely with that of the non-Jew.

What were Mr. and Mrs. Braden's reaction to this experience? At first, they both suffered immeasureably and felt a deep seated bitterness. As time passed Mrs. Braden came to accept what appeared to her as something inevitable in the light of the environment and pressures in which the children grew up. She had recognized long ago, as she noticed her own mother's metamorphosis, that the children received no meaningful knowledge of Judaism as a religion or as a way of life, that they had no feeling for it, and as a natural consequence they unconsciously or perhaps with some deliberation molded themselves and their lives on the gentile pattern. The result was that they were absorbed ethnically, married non-Jews and surrendered Judaism and the Jewish identity. Mr. Braden, who passed away in September of 1950, never quite resigned himself to the behavior of his children.

The Jewish Community Today

The People. The Jewish group in Opelousas does not share the characteristics of the general population of Opelousas or even the characteristics of the overall Jewish population of the United States.

It becomes obvious that the demographic situation in Opelousas is abnormal when it is noticed that there are only three Jewish children there and only one couple which might conceivably bear children in the near future. An analysis of the Jewish population will clear up the reasons for the apparent abnormality.

There are today in the Opelousas community (including Washington, five miles away) sixteen Jewish family units with but only a total of thirty-six individuals who consider themselves members of the Jewish group in any sense of the term. Actually, several of these have not been active in Jewish affairs for many years. Of the total group ten are widows and one is a widower; ten of this group are over fifty-five years of age. There is one couple in the twenties and the remaining adults are all unmarried. Of the thirty-six individuals in the group, eight are foreign born and twenty-eight are native born. The Jews of Opelousas of a generation ago had large families, and the answer to the paucity of Jewish children in that community lies, of course, in the intermarriage which has taken place in the last twenty-five years. As has been noted, in that period sixteen Jewish persons married non-Jews and in every case their offspring are being reared in the Christian Church. Except in one case, every Jewish person who married within the faith left Opelousas to reside elsewhere. Furthermore, those Jews who married non-Jews and still reside in Opelousas do not identify themselves with the Jewish group.

In conclusion, the Jewish population of Opelousas represents in highly developed form those demographic characteristics which usually accompany a declining ethnic group. As one would expect from their concentrations in the business and professional categories, they are well-to-do financially, are well-educated, and are increasingly aged. There is much intermarriage, particularly with Catholics (in which case the offspring necessarily will be Catholic); there is an emigration of young people; and finally there is no indication of any immigration of Jews from other communities. At best the Jewish population of Opelousas can hardly be expected to maintain the Jewish community as a going concern.

Occupation and Economic Structure. In general the Jewish people in Opelousas today are far above the middle economic class. Several members of the group are exceptionally wealthy, having accumulated their wealth through the leasing of large tracts of land to oil companies.

The largest number of both native-born and foreign-born individuals in the community are engaged in trade. There are fifteen persons in the group who may be considered in business, all but one of whom are self-employed. There is one doctor, one attorney (a woman), one in the scrap iron business, one employed by the Chamber of Commerce, and the rest operate stores. Of these, two have owned and operated a department store, one a men's clothing shop, three a women's clothing shop, one a grocery store, one an antique shop, and the remaining ones general merchandise establishments.

The economic structure of the Opelousas Jewish community appears thus to rest largely upon trade, the native-born in many cases following the line of business of their foreign-born parents. Those who are now or may have been in the past in the professions are native-born. While in the earlier life of the community several Jews took an interest in farming, some actually living on the farms and operating them, today no one is concerned with this occupation in any shape or form.

This peculiarity of economic structure in Opelousas is no doubt largely determined by certain predispositions which in themselves are the result of peculiar circumstances and conditions under which Jews have been living for centuries.

Social Life. In the light of the smallness of the total Jewish community, its disproportion of elderly persons, its lack of interest in Jewish matters, it is quite understandable why there exists practically no organized social life within the group. As recently as 25 years ago there did exist some organizations conducive to social life among the Jews. There were several reasons for this. In the first place, the group was larger in number; in the second place, there were many young people in the group; and thirdly, there was a stronger urge on the part of the Jews to preserve their cultural heritage and group life. It was to be

expected that they create a social structure which would tend to fulfill the needs of their own making.

The social and cultural life of the Jewish community at that time centered around their religious life. There were, of course, the weekly services plus the special services commemorating the many festivals and high holy days. There was the men's fraternal organization, the B'nai B'rith, which met regularly; and later there was the Sisterhood and its social and intellectual activities. Until 1942 effort was made at holding Sabbath school classes, and much emphasis was placed upon the confirmation ceremony which always proved to be a very important event in the life of the entire Jewish group. As has already been noted, many Jews were active workers in the Masonic Lodge, the Elks Club, and the civic clubs. There was a common interest also in charity. Aside from local charity, the Jewish community as a group contributed generously to the various funds and collections for needy coreligionists everywhere. Today only a few contribute to the United Jewish Appeal. The Zionist movement, which often provides a field of activity for Jews if for no other reason than that it is a very controversial issue, meant very little to the Jews of Opelousas.

Many of those interviewed, both Jews and non-Jews, pointed out that at the turn of the century the Jewish people were much closer to each other, visited often in each other's homes, and even organized parties among themselves. Today that is not at all the case. As it has already been pointed out, today there are no longer any religious services, no longer a Sabbath school, no B'nai B'rith Lodge, and no Sisterhood. As a matter of fact, it has been many years since the Jews of Opelousas have met as a group. Today many of them are still active but in strictly non-Jewish affairs. They belong to civic clubs, to the Chamber of Commerce, to the Library Association, and to many other men's and women's organizations.

During the many discussions with this writer most of the members of the Jewish community very frankly admitted that they missed Jewish companionship, Jewish association, and Jewish activities. This, too, is understandable since the Jews who

have remained Jews have done so because they have found no other religious belief and way of life acceptable.

Religious Life. It can be said that today religion as an institution has all but ceased to be a force in the life of the Jewish community of Opelousas. To be sure in the case of many of the "old timers" it still has deep meaning and is still inextricably interwoven into their thought and behavior. For instance, one family takes great pride in the fact that in the fifty years it has resided in Opelousas not once has pork in any shape or form made its way into their home. In the case of another family several children have remained unmarried simply because they never found Jewish persons to suit their tastes and would not marry persons not Jewish.

In 1877 when the Jewish group attempted to transfer the old world religious institution to Opelousas they actually discarded many of the practices which had been considered essential earlier. What they actually established was a type of reformed religion which is today referred to as Conservatism in the United States. Conservatism does not officially eliminate any of the important tenets of orthodox Judaism; it merely disregards many of them in actual practice. It was a real effort at that time to meet the changed needs of the American Jew, a means of preserving Jewish life amidst a total Christian environment. However, in the case of the Opelousas community even this form of Judaism began to be diluted twenty-five years ago. Step by step it gradually but steadily moved away from its traditional pattern and tended to adapt itself more and more to the exigencies of the general environment. In the middle thirties this community, like all other Jewish communities, was shocked into a renewed interest in Jewish life by events in Germany. A few years later it joined with the nearby Lafayette and Crowley communities in a concerted effort to bring about some sort of United program toward rebuilding the solidarity of the group through a revival of religious activity. A rabbi was actually employed whose residence was in Lafayette, but who conducted services in Opelousas one Friday in each month, in Crowley one Friday in each month, and in Lafayette the other two Fridays. On the high holy days services were held in Lafayette and the

members from Crowley and Opelousas were expected to attend there. This program lasted from 1939 to 1942, at which time the rabbi passed away. From that time all religious activity ceased in Opelousas.

It was inevitable that such disintegrating conditions in the religious and cultural life of the group would profoundly influence the thinking and behavior of the children of that group.

Jessie Bernard[15] points out that the Jewish personality, tortured by the conflicts of biculturality may try to secure integrity by any one of several paths. The Jew may reject the Gentile world so far as he is able to do so, or on the other hand he may completely reject the Jewish world. It is further possible that he may attempt to destroy both since he can find no place or happiness in either, or he might recognize the inevitable existence of both and work out some sort of *modus vivendi* so that he might live peacefully in both.

The Jewish community in Opelousas presents a striking example of Bernard's formula in action. The two paths taken by the present adult generation are sharply defined and clearly cut. Those few young people who have remained in Opelousas have rejected the Gentile world as far as it is possible to do so and still exist in the general community. They are not ashamed of their Jewishness; they understand that Jewish distinctiveness is inevitable and they are proud of their heritage. Judaism may disintegrate and die, they say, but they will not help it commit suicide. However, they are wise enough and honest enough to admit that they have achieved this integrity at a very dear price.

The number of those who took the second path is much larger. Jessie Bernard believes that the second path — rejecting the Jewish world — is much harder than the first. As far as it is known, such has not proved to be the case of those who took it in Opelousas. At present this phenomenon cannot of course, be measured. In only one case has a person who left the faith returned to it and then only after many years. His wife and two children are Baptist. At any rate, in another generation the group in question will completely disappear.

A very realistic appraisal of the feelings, thinking, and conditions of Jewish life in Opelousas is seriously and profoundly

described by the two following Jewish members of that community.

Robert Hines[16] is a very successful business man in the Opelousas area. Hines married a Christian girl, has become identified with a Christian church, attends very regularly, contributes substantially to it financially, and is rearing his children as Christians. He does not consider himself as a Jew any longer, albeit he has not officially joined a Christian church. It is most significant to note, however, that he is considered Jewish by both the Jews and non-Jews of the area.

Hines sees no particular Jewish problem[17] and he has some very definite ideas about the Jewish situation in Opelousas. He points out also that these ideas might well be applied to the Jewish situation at large.[18] In the first place, it is his conviction that there "is no unity and no Jewish life in Opelousas because the Jews here don't really want it." They prefer rather to leave the Jewish community and the racial and religious labels that go with it and become a more integral part of the larger community, since remaining Jews has a tendency to keep them in a marginal position in society. He states further that he has given a great deal of thought to this matter and his analysis of the disintegration of the Jewish community in Opelousas and Judaism at large, have resulted in the following conclusions regarding the causes for this condition:

1. Jews do not have enough unity at the present time.
2. Many Jews simply do not want to be members of a minority group, since they are not forced to do so.
3. Many Jews realize that their children will have greater opportunity in life as non-Jews.
4. There are no facilities in Opelousas for training in Jewish life.
5. Many Jews have come to the conclusion that there is no basic difference between Judaism and Christianity.

The other person to give a sharp, vivid, shocking, and what he believes to be a prophetic appraisal was Arnold Winsberg,

forty seven years of age, and unmarried. His family has been in Opelousas since the 1890's and has been considered rather successful in business, as well as in other phases of life. Winsberg has remained loyal to Judaism and is vitally interested in the Jewish problem and its many manifestations. He is well read in Jewish history and Jewish lore and feels very keenly about the whole Jewish situation. To him the problem is simply one of survival, and it is his deep conviction that the survival or extinction of Jews is intimately tied up with what he terms the "Wall and the Law." He believes that as long as Jews were forced to live a certain way by society at large and by their own rules, regulations, and traditions, they persisted and even flourished as individual Jews, as a Jewish community, and as a Jewish religion. However, since the "Wall and the Law" have both begun to crumble, the Jew, his religion, and his community are beginning to show signs of decay and disintegration. From his point of view. Opelousas is a good example, however small the scale, of the decay and disintegration of Jewish communal life in general, so long as it continues in the direction in which it is now going.

The Outlook. What are the factors determining the progressive defection of the successive generations of Jews from their religious system, in a process apparently nearly complete among the fourth generation in the Opelousas community?

The answer seems to lie basically in a certain unique aspect of the Judaistic religious system. Post Exilic Judaism may be characterized as a defensive religion, defensive in the sense that it was directed to maintain cohesion among the scattered parts of Jewish society.[19] This means, actually, that its main function has been to preserve that society in spite of its lack of territorial place, to keep its communal components from being absorbed by the societies in which they were embedded.[20] It is universally agreed among Jews that "if you take away religion from a Jew there is nothing left for him by which he can remain a Jew." That is, the disintegration of the synagogual structure implies ultimate disintegration of the community system. This is precisely what appears to be happening in the case of the Opelousas community.

There became evident upon close examination of the background of this particular community several basic factors responsible for the disintegration of the religious system within the Jewish group in Opelousas. The process of disintegration was actually a gradual one despite the feeling on the part of the community members that it came "with such heart breaking swiftness that even those most concerned in the group did not fully realize just what was happening to them." Furthermore, the collapse was all the more shocking and perhaps paradoxical because it occurred during a period of excellent cooperation with and pleasant acceptance by the general society about them.

A survey then of those factors directly or indirectly responsible for the failure of the religious system to function as a going concern in this particular community indicates the following. There is the element of a community of people too small in number to function as a cohesive group. There never really were enough individuals in the community to form a strong and lasting group structure, although the motivational factor for its function and life was strong in the beginning. In later years, the group became so small that there was an insufficient number of members to fill the various roles necessary to a sound community structure. The smallness of the group discouraged group activities which resulted in a lack of opportunities to share common experiences, hardships, joys, and mutual problems.[21]

The second element of great importance in the weakening of the religious structure is economic. The Jewish Sabbath falls on Saturday. The work rhythm of the American week, however, is Christian. Sunday is the Sabbath, and Saturday is a work day, the most important day in the week particularly in small communities in the South. This condition the Jews had to accept in Opelousas as they do in most communities except in those very large centers where they may comprise an important part of the merchant clan and can maintain their own work rhythm in the week. In Opelousas they had to adjust to the general system or lose out in the competitive race. One member of the group tells a story which illustrates graphically the perplexing problem faced by Jews in a small community. Many years ago when the Opelousas community still invited a rabbi to conduct

services on the high holy days it so happened that Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement and one of the holiest of the Jewish holidays, fell on a Saturday. Technically the holiday ends at sundown so the plan on the part of this family was to open their store at such time for such business as might be available from 6 p.m. until closing time. After the services at the Temple were concluded the rabbi was invited to this particular home for dinner. The very elaborate meal being completed, the head of the house and his three sons prepared to leave for the store. At that moment the elderly and sagacious rabbi settled in a comfortable chair and began an oration on the holiness of the Sabbath day, particularly if Yom Kippur fell on that day and the evils of neglecting the day. The men in the house were in a quandry, but as the rabbi had to be paid for his visit they decided that the Lord would perhaps overlook the evil of opening the store. So one by one they slipped out of the house while the mother was left to listen very attentively to the rabbi for the rest of the evening.

Thus it is that one of the very basic traditions of Judaism died very early in the life of that community. The destructive influence of the economic factor on the observance of the Sabbath is, however, only one manifestation of a more far-reaching phenomenon. In many aspects of the Jewish communal life the process of change has been one of a replacement of traditionally Jewish elements by American elements. In the religious system of the Jews there can, however, be no such replacement. Thus it is that nothing can quite replace the Sabbath and all of its meanings and influences in Jewish life.

Another element in the disintegration of Judaism in Opelousas has to do with social mobility. In Opelousas the class system has always been open, and because in any small town individual status, particularly for members of a minority group, takes on special meaning and significance, the Jews climbed its strata faster than any other group except members of the old established French families. However, rising in the class system demands conformity with the standards and modes at the system's various levels.[22] Given the choice of conforming with the behavioral patterns prescribed by the laws of Judaism or with

those demanded by the Opelousas class system the Jews of the third and the fourth generation particularly accepted the latter. These individuals in order to facilitate economic and class mobility have progressively discarded the traditional Jewish behavior patterns until in their lives today very few, if any, of them remain.

Other disintegrating elements have to do with the lack of Jewish education on all levels, with the lack of contact with the larger Jewish community, and with the lack of interested and strong leadership within the group itself. Any one of the above described elements could prove injurious and detrimental to a Jewish communal group; however, when all are combined into one force as they have been in the case of the Opelousas community disintegration and extinction of that communal group appears to be inevitable.

Today it is the consensus of both Jews and non-Jews in Opelousas that in another generation there will remain nothing of the Jewish community. The non-Jews believe that it is due to "a lack of motive on their part (the Jews), or perhaps a strong creed, or some other attachment." The Jews believe that it is due simply to the inevitable loss of the Jewish religious system. To the outsider looking in it appears in general that this communal group lacks the fortification which comes from group pride and the weight of public opinion. More specifically it appears that the group possesses few pieties, few memories, only a hazy knowledge of Judaism, and no spiritual life or resistance of its own.

NOTES

1. The sources for this information are Wm. Henry Perrin, *Southwest Louisiana, Biographical and Historical* (New Orleans: Gulf Publishing Co., 1891) and Mr. Ben Jacobs, Mrs. Celia Cortland, and Robert Blake, grandson of Samuel Blake. There has been a continuous line of five generations of the Blake family in Opelousas. (The names of some of the living Opelousas Jews are pseudonyms, such as Blake, Braden, and Cortland.)

2. Copies of these publications are at present in the possession of Edward M. Boagni III, 232 W. Grolee St., Opelousas. Mr. Boagni very kindly made this material available to the writer. It is interesting to note here that many of these newspapers were printed on wallpaper.

3. It may be of some sociological significance to note the following statement in the same paper dated November 4, 1854: "George Ramier, Public Crier, Respectfully offers his services to the Parish of St. Landry."

4. This item translated by the writer with assistance of Miss Aline Lafond, who proved most helpful in making contacts in Opelousas.

5. Perrin, *op. cit.*, Section on Biographical Sketches, p. 7.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

7. In the *Lafayette Advertiser* of December 28, 1949, may be found an item from Opelousas regarding the children of Mr. Meyer, "Sharley Meyer, 70, retired merchant and farmer died Friday night at his home in Palmetto. A native of St. Landry Parish. . . Services will be held at 11:30 a.m. today with a Port Arthur rabbi officiating. Interment will be in the Hebrew Rest Cemetery, Washington, Louisiana. Meyer is survived by two brothers, Harry of Port Arthur, and Joe of New Orleans, and eight sisters: Mrs. Rose Bergman, Port Arthur; Mrs. Jenny Bernstein, Kansas City, Missouri; Mrs. Lee Landry, Opelousas; Mrs. James Kuntz, New Orleans; Mrs. C. A. Rome, Baton Rouge; Mrs. Joe Rome, Gonzales; Miss Sophie Meyer, New Orleans, and Miss Sarah Meyer, Alexandria."

8. *Ibid.*, p. 55

9. Mrs. Robertson is a member of a family that has been in Opelousas for over 100 years. From 1893 to 1900 she worked in the store of Mr. David Cline.

10. The Humble Cottage Lodge was established in Opelousas in 1820. See Louisiana Historical Record Survey, unpublished inventory and research material for an *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue, Archives of Louisiana.* Compiled during the period of 1939-1941, in the custody of the Department of Archives, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Eugene Kahn, *The Future of Judaism in America* (New York: Liberal Press, 1934), pp. 165-66, gives an excellent summary of the various classifications into which the synagogue structure may fall. "The synagogue may be classified into various groups. They are incorporated and unincorporated, with and without buildings, with and without cemeteries, with and without schools, or libraries, or other activities, with or without a

preacher. They may also be grouped in accordance with the social status of their members (some are conducted and maintained entirely by workmen), or in accordance with Landsmannschaften, or in accordance with the text of their prayer and their religious observances (chasidim, Anshe Sfard, Sefardic, Ashkenazic, Conservative, Reformed). There are many lodges and organizations established for mutual benefit and other purposes which have a *sefer torah* and where members and neighbors *daven* (pray)."

13. Louisiana Record Survey, *op. cit.* At this time the name of the congregation was changed to "Congregation Emanuel."

14. The building is now (1951) being used by the "Christian Science" group of Opelousas.

15. Jessie Bernard, "Biculturality: A Study in Social Schizophrenia," an essay in Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

16. The writer knew Robert Hines when both were students at college.

17. Mrs. Cortland's two daughters, both highly educated and accomplished, who have remained in the fold, feel also that there is no Jewish problem — in Opelousas. They become cognizant of a Jewish problem, however, as soon as they leave Opelousas. They quite frankly admit that they prefer to remain in this community.

18. It must be kept in mind that in the four generations of adults in the Hines family by far the greatest number have married out of the Jewish faith and have been completely lost to the Jewish community. Hines gives an example, which to him is some sort of justification for intermarriage. He recalls that in the last twenty years sixteen marriages of Jews have taken place in Opelousas, fourteen of these to non-Jews and two to Jews. Today all fourteen intermarriages have remained successful, while one of the two others has failed. Hines may or may not be cognizant of the fact that most of the fourteen marriages he analyzes were Catholic marriages.

19. W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 199.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 199.

21. Muzafer Sherif, *An Outline of Social Psychology* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), pp. 98-110.

22. Warner and Srole, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

CHAPTER SIX

The New Iberia Community

Background of the Jewish Community

Mrs. Paul Suberbielle[1] tells a humorous yet pertinent tale regarding her interest in Jews and Jewish affairs of New Iberia. It appears that members of her family have for many years wondered about the origin and character of their maternal great-grandfather, whose name was Isaac Rachal, and who once lived in Spain. There is some suspicion among members of her family that "Great-grandfather Isaac was not always a Catholic and that in the search for what he believed to be a richer, worthier, happier life-experience, he showed remarkable expertness in discovering the right means and the right ends."[2]

In 1878, when Mrs. Suberbielle was six years of age, she and her brothers often played with the grandchildren of Nathan Herman, Gus and Nathan Eiseman. She particularly remembers them because they were interested in music and many years later Nathan became a violinist with an outstanding New Orleans Symphonic Society. She recalls also that friends of her mother in those days were the Max Levy family, the Weiss family, and the Davis family.

Mrs. Suberbielle has some very clear impressions of the Jewish people of those years. She often heard her parents refer to them as "refined and cultured." She heard that their home life was always pleasant, that they were never drunkards, and that they were unusually moral people. Economically they were in the middle group. As far as she knew, all the Jews in those

years in New Iberia operated small clothing stores. She does not recall any Jews who were interested in farming or in the professions.

Mrs. Suberbielle has always been conscious of Jews in New Iberia as a group. She has witnessed the Jewish community of New Iberia grow in number, organize into a working unit, build a temple, create a Sisterhood, a men's group (B'nai B'rith Lodge), worship regularly, and slowly develop status as a group. She recognizes the Jewish group as being somewhat distinct from the larger community, albeit she herself fails to see any particular difference between that group and the larger community aside from religious differences. She has been aware at times of anti-Jewish feeling in some quarters and she has no patience with that sort of attitude. She is not aware of any particular Jewish problem.

Aspace Le Cour has indicated that Jews were living in New Iberia and vicinity in the 1860's.[3] In 1871 Lazard Wormser settled in Jeanerette, which is a community about ten miles from New Iberia; however, its Jewish residents have always and do today consider themselves members of the Jewish community of New Iberia.

The *Louisiana Sugar Bowl,* a newspaper written in French and English, dated November 21, 1872 and published in Iberia Parish, contains a legal notice in which one of the parties was J. H. Levy.[4]

Wm. G. Weeks, a prominent business man of New Iberia today, who was born in this community in 1865, recalls a Jewish group living here when he was a child. He is of the opinion that a contributing factor to the growth and present strength of the Jewish community has been the steady flow of new Jews to the community, and although the number has not been great, at least more have come than have left.

Alphonse Davis, at present residing in New Iberia, advised that his father arrived in the community in 1870 and found a number of Jewish families living there at that time. Among them were the Weiss and Eiseman familes.

In 1885 Mrs. Henry Meyer[5] (nee Hortense Dreyfus) migrated to New Iberia, and because of her interest in Judaism and

Jewish affairs she quickly became an intimate part of that community. It is her belief that in 1885 the following Jews resided in New Iberia: the Davis family with eleven children, the Felix family with eleven children, the Meyer family with eight children, the Gugenheim family with two children, the Marx family with three children, the Weill family with no children, the Max Levy family with three children, Leopold and Lazard Kling, unmarried, the Dreyfus family with six children, Jack Levy unmarried, the Schokelt family with six children, the Silverman and the Morris Weill family with four children.

It would appear thus that in 1885 there were in New Iberia fourteen Jewish family units with almost eighty-five persons.

In 1892 the Schokelt family moved to Lake Charles for no other apparent reason than that they wanted to live in a larger community. In 1905 a Klotz family which had arrived in New Iberia after 1885 moved to Shreveport. The family was well-to-do financially but wanted their children to live in a larger Jewish community. In 1906 the Marx family moved to New Orleans because its members preferred a larger community for their children. One by one the Max Levy children moved to various larger communities.

In 1940 there were in the New Iberia Jewish community the following families:[6] The Creim family with one son, Mrs. Leon Dreyfus, the Nathan Davis family with two daughters, the Ralph Davis family with two sons, Alphonse Davis, unmarried, the Sol Gross family (Gueydan) with no children, the J. L. Gross family (Gueydan) with no children, the Heimendinger family (Abbeville) no children, the Hirsch family with two sons, the Charles Kahn family with no children, the Jack Kaplan family (Kaplan) with three children, the Tartak family (Kaplan) with two children, the Ben Kaplan family with no children (the writer), Mrs. Henry Meyer, the Reubin family with two sons, the Hershberg family with no children, the Justin Wormser family (Jeanerette) with one son and one daughter, the Joseph Wormser family (Jeanerette) with one son and daughter, the Jacob Weill family with one daughter, Jules Weill, unmarried, the Alfred Lewald family with one son and one daughter, the Kling family with no children, Janice Scharff, unmarried, and

the Karnofsky family with no children (Mrs. Karnofsky is not Jewish).

An examination of the above information reveals that the Jewish community of New Iberia has been drawing its membership from several surrounding areas: Jeanerette, ten miles distant; Abbeville, twenty-five miles distant; Kaplan, twenty miles distant; and Gueydan, twenty miles distant. It appears further that in 1940 there were in that community twenty-four family units with approximately sixty-five persons. It is well to note also that in 1940 the greatest majority of children were young persons of non-marriageable age.

The Jews comprising the immediate New Iberia community and the larger Jewish community of that area followed for many years the line of endeavors which was traditional among most Jews in small communities at the turn of the century. When the first Jews arrived on the New Iberia scene they became small merchants. Mrs. Suberbielle recalls well that during her childhood all Jews had stores — mostly clothing stores. One had a liquor store which appeared most improper to the non-Jews. Since those days there has been some change in the occupational pattern of the Jews in and around New Iberia.

The Jews in Kaplan, Gueydan, and Abbeville have concerned themselves with the rice business, particularly with the milling of rice. The Brooks family has for years been dealing in cattle and horses. Alphonse Davis and his brother Nathan (deceased 1949) have been for many years successful in the insurance business. Miss Scharff has taught school for many years, as did Louise Lewald before her marriage. Alfred Lewald and the Wormsers have operated large and very modern department stores and while the Kahns lived in New Iberia they operated a drug store.

In general, the Jewish citizens of New Iberia and vicinity have been successful in their businesses and professions. This area has not known any serious depressions, although in 1907-08 there was felt an economic slump. However, no Jews left the community for that reason. In the history of the total Iberia Jewish community only one Jewish business firm has been known to go into bankruptcy.

Practically all Jews of the community have owned and still own property, which consists mostly of homes and businesses. The Jews in Abbeville have in the past owned large tracts of land, but they themselves did not farm there.[7] There was, however, one successful farmer in this group. He was a man named Goldberg who farmed a rather large area near Jeanerette from 1915 to 1920. However, he was not an intimate part of the community and moved away to parts unknown.

In the last thirty years a small number of Jews[8] have migrated to New Iberia, opened businesses, remained a few years and drifted on. None of these was interested in establishing permanent roots and becoming established members of the community. Some of these were as follows: The Goldmans, who arrived in 1910 and left in 1916; the Gersons, who came in 1915 and left a few years later. Between the years 1915 and 1925 came the Bear Brothers, the Schoenemans, the Immerglucks, and the Mitchell Brothers. All appeared interested only in establishing flourishing businesses, and when these did not materialize after a few years, they moved on to greener pastures. Those who came to establish homes and rear families and have taken in their stride the bad years as well as the good years in business matters, have remained and prospered.

Mrs. Gertrude Labe,[9] who was born in Clinton in 1873 and lived there many years, spent two years with a sister in New Iberia (1888-1889) and recalls today the striking differences between Clinton and New Iberia. It is significant to note that even to a young person (Mrs. Labe was then only fifteen years of age), the character of the communities stood out. In the first place, Mrs. Labe noticed that in New Iberia the Jewish group was by far more heterogeneous. The group was composed of German Jews, Russian Jews, and French Jews. In Clinton the entire group had migrated from a relatively small area in Germany. In New Iberia she recalls attending religious services very often and particularly does she recall the activity on the high holy days. Even in those early years before there was a house of worship in New Iberia the group always called in a rabbi for the high holy day, usually only a student rabbi, to conduct those important services. She recalls that the Jews in

New Iberia during the time she lived there appeared to cling more to their Jewish past and to gather about them some vestige of an environment which was their own. She was impressed also with the fact that, albeit small in numbers, new Jews continued to move to New Iberia, whereas very few migrated to Clinton after 1885.

Until Mrs. Labe came to New Iberia she had not even known that there were such persons as orthodox Jews. She recalls finding in New Iberia a Jewish community which seemed to instill each member with a pride in himself and his group. As Mrs. Labe reviews her experiences in things Jewish as she felt them, while living in Clinton, Lake Charles, New Iberia, and Thibodaux, she particularly senses that in New Iberia at the turn of the century, the Jews did not seek to evade their obligation to things Jewish. They did not appear to want to step out of the Jewish situation or to attempt by subterfuge or evasion to deny their need for things Jewish.

In 1875 a Torah[10] was brought to New Iberia and was kept in the Masonic Temple where the Jewish group worshipped regularly. In 1879 the present congregation, Gates of Prayer, was organized for the purpose of building a temple. In 1898 a Jewish Ladies Aid Society was established for the purpose of assisting the needy in the general community, for raising funds for Jewish needs, and for social gatherings of the Jewish women. This group contributed $1,000.00 to the building fund of the temple.[11]

In the *Weekly Iberian* of Saturday, January 23, 1904 may be found the following article, headlined

> Jewish Synagogue on Weeks Street is completed.
> . . . We congratulate our friends for the spirit they have showed in erecting such an edifice in our city, where they can worship as to their faith and teachings required of them.

The Temple has been active since its construction. Services are held there every Friday evening. No matter how few attend, on the high holy days a student Rabbi is invited to conduct services. He remains in New Iberia during the ten day period

of the Jewish New Year and the Day of Atonement. A Sabbath School has been in operation in this congregation for the last forty-five years and children of non-members as well as of members have been trained for confirmation. In 1885 a B'nai B'rith Lodge was organized which functioned for many years. It became defunct in the 1920's, was re-established in 1937, and has been very active since that date. Of particular pride to the Iberia Jewish community has been the realization of a social center which was completed in connection with the temple in 1950 at the cost of $10,000.00. The activities of the social center may be classified as educational, social and recreational.[12]

The Jewish people of New Iberia have long been active in the affairs of the large community but they have also been active in the affairs related to Jewish matters. On the one hand, they have been and are still active in Masonry, yet most of the men have been and are now active in B'nai B'rith affairs. They contributed heavily to non-Jewish causes as well as to Jewish causes. Eugene Guillot[13] tells the story that the largest contributor to the Catholic Church fund at the time of its construction in 1888 was the father of Alphonse Davis who alone contributed $500.00. Many other Jews also contributed freely. When the New Iberia Golf Club was being planned it was Alfred Lewald, Father McGlade, and the Reverend Mr. Serex, the Methodist Minister, who were instrumental in the organization and development of that project. By the same token the Jews contributed heavily to the building of their own social center.

Mrs. Suberbielle recalls that when she was still a young girl, Jules Dreyfus was known to be "a great civic worker." He was elected a member of the town council and later a member of the House of Representatives. His brother, Leon, was instrumental in the building of the temple and was president of the congregation for twenty-five years. Most of the Jewish men are either Rotarians, Lions, or Kiwanians. Robert Lewald was president of the Kiwanis Club in 1950.

Whereas the Jews of New Iberia have always been active in social and civic affairs of the community at large, they have also participated whole-heartedly in the activity of things Jewish. Mrs. Henry Meyer, who has given a great deal of leadership,

guidance, and inspiration to the Jewish group, says that the Jews of New Israel "have been reached by other means than just material interests. Here they feel at home because the surroundings have created for them a homelike atmosphere." Here, she feels, the Jewish people have not and are not today merely working for personal pride and ambition but also for an idea. Here they seem to have created a neighborliness among themselves which appears to have become a code in itself, so that the members of the community feel that they want to support the group which has become intimately known to them.

Mrs. Meyer, as well as some of the other individuals, feels that there is significance in the fact that there has been so little marriage out of the faith by the members of that group. Mrs. Meyer agrees that intermarriage could easily put an end to anti-Semitism, but she is convinced it could do so by first putting an end to Jewry itself. In the history of the Jewish community of New Iberia, even in its largest sense, there have been only three families in which marriages out of the faith took place.[14] In the last twenty-five years sixteen Jewish persons of New Iberia proper have married other Jews and all are now residing in New Iberia.

The Jewish Community Today

The People. As has been pointed out earlier in this chapter the New Iberia Jewish community actually included membership from areas as far removed as Jennings, Crowley, Abbeville, Kaplan, Gueydan, Franklin, and Jeanerette. The congregational records[15] of the group as of 1951 indicate that this communal group is now composed of thirty-seven units including seventy-six individuals. Despite the fact that during the last ten year period eight members of the group have married, six to Jews and two to non-Jews, there are very few children within this group. It is very significant to note at this point that all of the above mentioned eight couples are residing permanently in the New Iberia community. As has been the case in most small Jewish communities, Jews arrived as family groups, a condition which should have been conducive to a high birth rate. That

proved to be the case in the first and second generations; however, the present generation of married couples has deviated from this characteristic. There are today in the New Iberia community eight Jewish couples under forty years of age. This number does not include the two intermarriages in which the children will be reared as Catholics. Of the eight couples, three couples each have two children, one has three children, and the other four have no children. It is evident then that the Jews of the New Iberia community share the characteristic of the Jewish population as a whole as far as the birth rate is concerned. Significantly enough, the condition of a very low birth rate is found among Jews of small communities as well as of largely populated areas. Most of the factors associated with low birth rates may be observed to affect the Jewish group of New Iberia. The one major exception being, of course, the factor relating to urban and non-urban influence.[16] An examination of the population makeup will suggest the following demographic characteristics. Comprising the group are thirty-six males and forty females. There are only four individuals of marriageable age who have never been married. One of these is approximately forty years of age and the other three are forty-five years of age or over. This communal group contains seven widows, all but one of whom are over sixty years of age. Twenty-one couples are living together. There are in the group fourteen children under nineteen years of age and five between nineteen and twenty-five. As is the case in the general Jewish population, the New Iberia community shows an increasing proportion of individuals in the older age group, fifty or older. Twenty-four of the seventy-six are above fifty years of age. In the age group 20-29 all but three have attended some college or university.

In the last ten years only four members of the group have left the community. One couple (the writer) moved to Lafayette and two young men settled elsewhere when their war duty was completed in 1945. In 1940 this communal group was composed of twenty-four family units and sixty-five persons which had increased to thirty-seven family units and seventy-six persons by 1950, indicating a slow but steady rise in its population.

Occupation and Economic Structure. An inspection of the economic structure of modern Jewry in general strongly suggests that as the size of the general community in which Jews live decreases, the proportion of Jews in industry declines and that of trade and the professions increases. This condition becomes evident in the study of the occupational distribution of the Jews comprising the New Iberia community. There are thirty individuals in the group who are gainfully employed, and though they have all achieved comparatively high economic status the real leadership in business and the professions still remains in the hands of the non-Jews of the larger community. Of the above mentioned thirty persons, one is a doctor, one a school teacher, another taught until her recent marriage, one is a chemical engineer, three are in the cattle and horse business, two own and operate a large rice mill, four others are in general business of buying and selling rice, one is in the insurance business and the remaining sixteen persons are in the merchandising business. In this group may be found owners of three large department stores and two wearing apparel shops (one for men and one for women). Two other Jews have large furniture stores. The others are in the general merchandizing business. All of the above individuals either own their own business or are associated with parents who own them, a fact which brings out the tendency on the part of Jews toward independence in occupation.

Another fact worthy of note is that a large percentage of the Jews are not in trade – precisely twelve – which is an indication that, contrary to general belief, there is really no independent Jewish economy but that Jews tend in time to become an integral part of the economic structure of the area in which they find themselves.

The great majority of these business and professional people are very successful and are considered by the larger community as progressive and their efforts not particularly unproductive. The general community does not consider the economic structure of the Jews in the New Iberia Community unusually abnormal. This may be so because the thirty individuals analyzed above are scattered in six different communities. This concentration of Jews in successful businesses has not heightened Jewish visi-

bility, a condition which in other communities has caused envy on the part of many members of the general community. There is no doubt that the economic structure of the Jewish community group of New Iberia differs markedly when compared with that of the total community. The essential differences may be found in the classes of business, in the income of those businesses, and in the length of time in business. Every one of the businesses and professions mentioned has been in existence at least fifteen years.

Because the Jews of this group have such high economic status they have been able for many years to uphold a high standard of living, to send their children to the best educational institutions, and to contribute heavily to local and Jewish charity needs. In 1950, for instance, this small group contributed $12,000.00 to the Joint Distribution Committee, the central agency for Jewish philanthropy. The economic result of the occupational structure of this group is not a large number of extremely wealthy families but a higher-than-average income for most families.

In conclusion is may be said that the members of the New Iberia Jewish community exist, from an economic point of view, within the framework of a middle class capitalistic economy. However, it is significant to point out that among the Jews this economic institution lacks to a marked degree the social and economic values which are dominant in the general community. The special emphasis on wealth and individual enterprise, the evaluation of the individual in terms of his economic position exist, of course, as basic elements in the Jewish community. However, they do not contribute the most basic structure of practice. On the same level of importance or perhaps above it are still placed those values assigned to education, social justice, and individual integrity.[17]

Social Life. The Jews of the New Iberia community individually and collectively feel proud of their communal group. They claim that despite its smallness and inadequacy it is one of the most, if not the most, ideally functioning small Jewish communities in Louisiana. They are convinced that they are here making an attempt to bring into reality a social existence

for Jews in what is evidently a non-Jewish environment, and they are well aware of the fact that their communal structure has not been and is not now being erected according to religious and traditional precepts. However, they feel that their communal structure shows vitality and a healthfulness which are to be found in relatively few comparable communities. This is not to imply that there do not exist in the community those conflicts and disagreements and problems found within any organized group.

The fundamental point of origin of this particular "going concern" is the socially creative force which radiates from two basic elements: religious activity and social activity both centering around Judaism. Such success in religious life as this group enjoys seems to stem from a desire on the part of a great majority of its members for a full realization of a synthesis of the two ideals mentioned above. Most of the individuals in this group appear to possess the attitudes and viewpoints appropriate for life in a Jewish community. There is an *esprit de corps* within this group which makes itself felt the moment one mingles within it.

It is quite evident that while the Jews of this community undoubtedly constitute a distinct unit in the general community, they also form an integral part of the society in which they live. They participate individually and as a group in every phase of the broader community life. In general — and overtly at least — they think, act, and behave like their neighbors, yet they share in some measure the cultural heritage of their ancestors.

The individual Jews of this group are generally ranked in the middle of the class structure of the larger community. This is understandable when one becomes cognizant of the basic criteria used in this area for class stratification. These are (1) family background, (2) wealth — including ownership of land and place of residence, (3) standard of living, (4) occupational status, and (5) social conformity.[18]

No matter what may have been the family background of the Jews in this area they can hardly hope to compete in status with the old French families. Nevertheless, the family life of the Jews is admired by the non-Jews. The Jewish families in

this area have been long established, stable, secure, and sacred.

From the point of view of economic status the majority of Jews in this area have actually been situated in the upper bracket. Furthermore, they own their business establishments and live in attractive and beautifully furnished homes which are located in the most desirable sections of their respective communities, and as is the case in most small communities the Jews of the New Iberia group scrupulously conform to the socially desirable patterns of behavior.

Actually, the Jews of this particular area may be said to follow the behavior pattern of the upper class, but they have never been rewarded for it by being included in that class.

Among the Jews themselves in this area there is no class distinction, despite the fact that German Jews, French Jews, Polish Jews, and Russian Jews are to be found there. This has not always been the case in American Jewry in general nor in most specific communities. At first there was a great deal of antagonism between the West European Jews and the East European Jews, as well as between the long settled Jews and the larger number of recent immigrants. The German and French Jews and the long settled Jews felt that they were better educated and culturally superior to those who came later, and they resented the tendency of non-Jews to group them with the others. For many years there existed a very definite class distinction between the groups. However, in recent years common needs and common problems plus the rapid Americanization of the East European immigrants have resulted in the obliteration of the bitter feeling among the groups.

The general social life of the Jews of the New Iberia community is essentially the same as that of their non-Jewish neighbors. Furthermore their home life, which is conditioned by the prevailing customs and mores, modified slightly here and there by former cultural peculiarities such as types of food and literature, are the same as those about them. Their major interests differ in no marked way from those of their neighbors except that they do include other interests pertaining to their own group. Those special interests, of course, arise from their particular religious activities.

Yiddish has disappeared as a medium of conversation. An inquiry, covering all the Jewish families, indicates that there is not a single home in which Yiddish is spoken among all the members. The language rises to importance only in the several homes which include foreign-born parents. Even in these instances, the parents speak Yiddish only very seldom and, even when they do, only among themselves.

There are a few Jews who subscribe to Anglo-Jewish publications, but in no home was there evidence of a Yiddish newspaper or periodical. In a few of the homes one can still see evidence of old world background such as pictures, furniture, huge feather pillows, books, dishes and silverware.

It seems that it has always been taken for granted in this particular communal group that young people should get married. The family and its ties are still sacred aspects of everyone's life. The rate of inter-marriage in the history of this community has been so small that it is practically negligible. Only three members of the group, all men and all of the second generation, are married to non-Jews. One of these has been married many years. This couple has no children. The other two are very young men who married since their return from service in World War II. All three individuals continue to be regarded as members of the Jewish group, and all three are keeping up their affiliations with the group and are taking an active part in its affairs. A very unique event has occurred in this community in recent years. Four years ago a young lady of Catholic background became a member of the Jewish faith, and two years ago she married a rabbi of the Conservative Temple.

In the history of this community there has been no case of divorce or broken home.

All but four of the young adults now members of this community have been to college and their training has been in the fields of education, business administration, sociology, music, and science.

The specially Jewish activities of the group center around the Temple and especially the Social Center which was added to the Temple building in 1950. Both adults and children participate in one form or another in the activities sponsored by the

Center. For the adults these activities prove an opportunity for social gatherings, forums, celebration of Jewish festivals, and discussions of general topics. (A presentation of some material from this thesis project proved to be a source of quite a vehement discussion at one of the meetings held in the Center.) In the case of the children the activities both social and religious are designed to prepare them for future participation in Jewish life as well as in the community at large. They hold their Sabbath School classes there, they have their parties there, and they participate in the religious festivals there.

In general it may be said that the activities of the Center relate themselves to the following: (1) Jewish festivals, (2) talks on Judaism, (3) book reviews, (4) recitals, and (5) recreation in general.

The group has an active B'nai B'rith Lodge and a Temple Sisterhood. They meet jointly once a month for a social gathering. These gatherings have proved to be very successful in many different ways. The members have enjoyed the activities and the fellowship. It is also the consensus of the group that the Center and its activities have resulted in increased group consciousness and in group sentiment as well as in greater understanding of and appreciation for things Jewish.

Further tending to integrate the elements of the Jewish community has been the Zionist Movement. Many members of this group have for years felt a keen interest in the establishment of Israel as a national Jewish homeland.

The Jews of the New Iberia community have for many years placed much emphasis upon Jewish holidays and their celebration. Since many Jewish holidays are of joyous nature, the members of the group find in them frequent opportunities for relaxation and gatherings.

Religious Life. In the minds of many of the Jews of New Iberia, religion is the *sine qua non* of Jewishness. Even though practice may be confused and spasmodic, even though congregational membership is not a day by day reality, this group has long recognized that the Jewish religion constitutes the main cohesive factor in the structure of that community. One must not assume for one moment that in the New Iberia group the

Temple is in any sense coextensive with Jewish life, or that it is inseparable from the activities of the congregation, or that it fulfills all the needs which it did for so long a time in the history of the Jewish people. However, it does appear (the writer has been observing closely the New Iberia community since 1937) that in the case of this group, small and isolated as it is, the Temple responds in an unusually large degree to the needs of the Jewish life of the community as a whole. It does so through certain restricted functions connected with worship, Jewish education, and Jewish fellowship. Judaism in the New Iberia community does not appear to suffer as greatly from the deadly indifference and ever increasing secularization of Jewish life as it does in the neighboring communities. In other words, the members of the New Iberia congregation have identified themselves more closely than most other comparable groups with the Jewish religion and in their case, at any rate, it appears to be a much more satisfying experience. In their communal life the Jewish religion has not declined in value or in its role as it has in many others. It is the conviction of the great majority of that group that their Temple, as the embodiment of the Jewish conception of life, is the one institution that can best preserve for them the Jewish heritage and the Jewish communal structure in general.

The Temple in New Iberia is an impressive, small, red brick structure. It is open for service every Friday evening, although there are many occasions when the number of members attending is very small. Very often the services are conducted by the children. On the high holy days a student rabbi is invited to conduct the special services. For many years a staff of able volunteers have been conducting Sabbath school or Sunday school wherein children are prepared for confirmation. On many occasions children from Lafayette have attended these classes.

The Temple serves not only as the fountainhead of Jewish inspiration and the center of character building activities, but it is also the agency for Jewish philanthropy. Through such organizations as the B'nai B'rith Lodge, the Temple Sisterhood, and the Sunday School (all of which are, in this particular community, closely related to the functions of the Temple), the

Temple proves to be not only the source of religious experiences but also a forum for Jewish thought and, in a sense, a clearing house for all Jewish action personifying Jewish idealism and faith. It is worthy of note for instance that all Jews living in the New Iberia community are active members of the congregation, while in the nearby community of Lafayette a third of the Jews have not even become affiliated with the congregation.

The strongly integrated religious structure of the New Iberia community has resulted in an interdependence of all of the communal spheres of activity. It has given the group there a sense of local communal responsibility and a feeling of responsibility for the Jewish community at large in America and in the world.

The Outlook. The Jewish people of the New Iberia community are proud of their own group and of the total Iberia community. They feel that they have helped to make New Iberia the lovely place it is, and in turn they are convinced that the large community has made it possible for them to succeed in their own ventures. They feel that this Jewish community is the only Jewish community from New Orleans to Beaumont, Texas which has shown any real progress in the last ten years. They all agree that they lead a good life in New Iberia and in the surrounding area. Economically they are successful, which is important to them in the general sense that a high standard of living is desired by all. It also is important to them through their awareness that the attainment of a greater measure of economic security is, whether they like it or not, still another method whereby Jews can assure their safety. The Jews of the New Iberia community feel that they have status as individuals and a Jewish life which in no way interferes with their activities at large. Either as individuals or as a group they do not have any illusions about anti-Semitism. While there has never been any overt indication of anti-Jewish feeling in New Iberia, they are, nevertheless, aware that oftentimes they are being merely tolerated, and they recognize fully that this condition carries with it a sense of superiority on the part of the persons who assert it. However, it does not seem to disturb them very much.

In discussing this matter with two of the younger members of the community,[19] the following interesting situations came to light. Both young persons believe that there is a Jewish problem albeit they did not become seriously aware of it until they went to the university. There they discovered a clannishness on the part of both Jews and Gentiles which resulted in the polarization of the groups as to dating, many social and religious activities, membership in sororities and fraternities, etc. The Jewish problem to these two young individuals is one of survival of Jewish consciousness. Neither of these young persons is afraid of the problems and both are quite prepared to go out into the world and face them and all of their implications.

Today the New Iberia community reflects in general the attitude of those young persons. The Jewish group in New Iberia appears to be rather sure of its footing and thus less sensitive to criticism. On the whole the members of the group feel a certain pride in their religious activity, in their group accomplishments, and in their local leadership.

They are pleased also with their relationship to the larger community with which they feel a kinship and where they have found opportunities for work, for education, and for civic and social participation and which have so far not conflicted with their basic Jewish interest. Most members of the group feel keenly about the establishment of the state of Israel, in no sense as a homeland for themselves but rather as a source of world Jewish morale.

A visit with the Jewish community in New Iberia will soon convince one that here is a group of Jews who have not quite stepped into a state of self-contempt and self-repudiation. Here is a group which does not spend all of its energy on self defense and philanthropy alone; here is a group which does not appear weary of being Jewish, nor does it desire to live down its identity. Here is a group which has shown rather that even in a small rudimentary community, Jews can live surprisingly well, happily, securely, and without too much fear of extinction. However, members of this group are well aware of the fact that once the group loses its identity with Judaism at large, once it relinquishes its communal organizations, once it gives up its religious con-

sciousness, once it fails to develop sound and able leadership, the forces responsible for disintegration that affect every ethnic group will begin to operate on their group and sooner or later effect its complete elimination.

NOTES

1. Mrs. Suberbielle was born in New Iberia in 1872 and has been a resident of this community most of her lifetime.

2. As a small child Mrs. Suberbielle (nee Pamela Burke) recalls her grandmother, Aspace Le Cour, telling her and the other children of her family a most fantastic story about witnessing in the year 1860 the funeral of one Nathan Herman as it was conducted in an Orthodox Jewish manner. This unique ceremony so impressed grandmother Aspace that she took great pains to recount the incident time and again. Hence the vivid recollections of Mrs. Suberbielle.

3. The following information was obtained through personal interviews with Mrs. Suberbielle, Wm. J. Weeks, Justin Wormser, Alphonse Davis, Eugene Guillot, and Mrs. Henry Meyer. Wm. H. Perrin, who discusses a number of prominent Opelousas Jews in *Southwest Louisiana Biographical and Historical,* does not mention one Jewish person as being outstanding in the New Iberia area.

4. This newspaper file may be found in the Archives of the Iberia Parish Library, New Iberia, Louisiana.

5. Mrs. Meyer has been long considered a leader in Jewish affairs not only in the New Iberia area but in all Louisiana. She has been responsible for creating a number of Jewish Sisterhoods in this area, and was for forty years the recording secretary of the organization in New Iberia.

6. The records are in possession of Harold Wormser, secretary of the congregation, New Iberia, Louisiana.

7. There is, of course, the case of A. Kaplan which is fast becoming a legend in these parts. A. Kaplan came to this part of the country about sixty years ago and began buying up great tracts of land. At one time he owned much of what is now Vermilion Parish. It was he also who developed the irrigation system which today makes this area such an important rice growing center. The town of Kaplan is named after him. His beautiful estate in Crowley was bought a few years ago by the author, Frances Parkington Keyes. Kaplan passed away in 1942.

8. This information made available by Alphonse Davis.

9. Mrs. Labe now resides in Thibodaux, Louisiana.

10. This information made available by Mrs. Henry Meyer.

11. It is worthwhile to note that Jews very often contribute large sums of money toward the building of Catholic and Protestant churches, they seldom if ever ask Gentiles for financial assistance toward the construction of their own houses of worship. As a matter of fact most Jews prefer that Gentiles not contribute money to Jewish causes of any kind.

12. Lafayette, which contains a much larger Jewish group than does New Iberia, has never had a B'nai B'rith Lodge and does not have a rabbi to officiate at the high holy days, nor does it possess a social center for group activities.

13. Mr. Guillot, a resident of New Iberia for seventy years, is a Catholic who was recently honored by being made a Knight of St. Gregory.

14. A sister of Alphonse Davis married a Catholic and her children are Catholic and have in turn married Catholics. Sam Karnofsky married a Catholic, they have no children, and the two sons of Ralph Davis married Catholic girls. Both young men are still active in Jewish life, although their children will be reared as Catholics.

15. The records are in the possession of Harold Wormser, Secretary of the Congregation, New Iberia, Louisiana.

16. Rosenquist and Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-209.

17. In regard to this particular characteristic, Arnold and Caroline Rose point out that a defense against prejudice, and one that is of long standing in the Jewish community, is a feeling of superiority, especially in matters of intellect and morals. Some of this feeling is a legitimate pride in worthy achievements of Jews, but much of it is just a prop to insecurity feeling. Arnold and Caroline Rose, *America Divided* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 252.

18. This information was obtained by discussing the matter with a number of Jews and non-Jews and by years of personal observation.

19. Joan Davis and James Creim are both seniors at Louisiana State University at this time (1951).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Analytical Considerations

Having described the nature of the Jewish community in general and the particular characteristics of the three selected communities, one is faced with the task of analyzing the material for the purpose of achieving some logical, meaningful relationship between past and present phenomena or processes and the attainment of generalized analytical knowledge which may be applied to any number of comparable cases in the future.

It must be noted at this point that the field of inquiry covering this thesis project revealed that the concept of the Jewish community is far more complex than is generally conceived and that the problem facing the typical American Jewish community is more than an academic one. It has, in fact, become a very practical problem in applied social research, stemming from a need by a group of people who are in the grip of a serious and far-reaching crisis which has assumed acute proportions.[1]

Any student of the history of the Jews and of Judaism is forcefully struck with the realization that within this group's experience are to be found factors which admittedly lie beyond the range of anyone's knowledge and which seem to defy present techniques of measurement and analysis. The outstanding example of this strange phenomenon is, of course, the matter of survival on the part of this group. Oftentimes students of society dismiss this phenomenon as a mere chance, or the result of a series of forces as yet not quite definable. Jewish prophets have quite another explanation of it. They claim that the Jews have

endured "by virtue of the creative power of the spirit;"[2] that they are God's "chosen" people; that they are prophets with a messianic vision;[3] and finally that they are a single, a singular, and an indestructable people, an *Am Olam*, an eternal people.[4] Their continual existence has thus been called a contradiction in terms. This phenomenon does not appear to fit into any of the usual patterns — idealistic or positivistic — by which students try to read history. One thing seems certain — that sociologists have abstained from making it a serious object of investigation. Aside from Max Weber and Martin Buber few have undertaken to study this problem.[5]

Thus, it is that herewith an attempt will be made toward the interpretative understanding of social action as it is manifested in the Jewish community in order to arrive at an explanation of its *raison d'etre.*

From the data analyzed, there seem to be certain factors operating within any Jewish community group which have been responsible for the origin, development, and survival of that group and the absence of which have been responsible for the disintegration and extinction of that group.

It appears logical then to assume that in order to analyze the forces which constitute the strengths and weaknesses of the three communities in question one must first explore the historical nature of those forces which have originally given character to the general Jewish community and made possible its survival to this day. It is agreed by all students of this subject that the central core of this social system is the religion known as Judaism and the whole series of subsystems of common value-orientations arising from this basic pattern.[6] The institutionalization of these shared value-orientations has resulted in a Jewish culture ideological system and to some degree almost every Jew is today a reflection of that ideological system. This system became crystallized during the days of the ghetto community in Europe. Judaism, as the Jews conceived it in those days characterized for them in clearest tones the course of action they were to follow. Their religious system demanded of them that they produce a certain type of character. This was a task no one could evade with impunity. Because of the constant and varied

environmental pressures imposed upon them there were in those communities few, if any, neutrals, few cynics, few amateur spectators. They could not and did not shrink from taking sides. They knew where they stood and upon that stand they planted themselves with what appeared to be an invincible sort of firmness.

What then constitute the fundamental values which motivated the organization of the Jewish community and which were very soon elevated to the rank of basic principles of life which subsequently became the social framework within which this group existed?

To begin with, the contractual relations of Jews to God, a relation which directly concerns every one of them, were the real power and significance of membership in the Jewish group.[7] This relationship contributed to the "chosen people" idea which occupied a very special niche in the rationale of Judaism and contributed abundantly to the fortification of the communal group and to its staying power.[8] The second important factor was the synagogual organization which in the ghetto not only gave Judaism the necessary mold for resistance against foreign ideas, but fitted it to become a center of universal ideation.[9] Thus, it was that the early Jewish synagogue answered all questions in clear cut fashion and in so doing gave reality to the conception of the higher life under which the Jews operated for many hundreds of years. But it did even more than this; it actually prescribed the pattern of his entire life. From the time that the child was born (or even before that, because marriage could take place only within the synagogue structure) to the time he was buried (because he could only be buried within that system) the individual lived within the orbit it prescribed. His beliefs were inculcated by the synagogue; his morals, ethics, politics, law, theology, and philosophy came to him chiefly at the hands of the synagogue.[10] In his social life, the synagogue defined his holidays and prescribed the form and character of the festivals; it influenced the games he played, the dress he wore, the food he ate. Very little in the life of the ghetto Jew went on outside the sphere of the synagogue. The ghetto world was a complexity of people, goods, enjoyment, pain,

activities with which men commonly busy themselves but always before them holding the belief that the Jewish soul was a spiritual entity only temporarily imprisoned in a body soon destined to be freed to live in a heaven of unutterable bliss.

Jewish holy days, particularly the Sabbath, have also played a vital role in the survival of the Jewish communal group. They proved to be not only vehicles through which ideological orientation resulted but opportunities for providing the rationale for such ideologies. The Sabbath has always been infinitely more to Jews than a day on which toil is prohibited.[11] To the Jews of the ghetto, the Sabbath was that day on which they lived in the kingdom of God. Upon all other days they were subjected to the painful insecurity of an excluded minority, but on the Sabbath they lived in the assurance of a chosen people. This is what the Jews meant when, at the close of each Sabbath they uttered the benediction: *"Baruch atoh Adonay hamandil ben kodesh l'hol"* (Blessed by Thou, O Lord, who distinguishes between the sacred and the profane), between the weekdays of man and the Sabbath of God.[12]

The rituals and activities surrounding the early Jewish festivals proved to be elements which added something of dignity, grace, and spiritual power even to the most sordid life of the ghetto. On the one hand, the minute regulations and the tortuous and crabbed study of Talmudic lore "stiffened the backbone" and strengthened the faculties of the group and, on the other hand, there was power in the ritual of the service, in its words and music, in the very voice of the cantor. It was a thing which seemed to get into the essence of their Being — this thing of standing together, of hard and proud men, weak ones and evil ones, young and old ones, all surrendering what they individually were to become something greater than they could ever be individually. It was their religion, their common activities, their togetherness which brought peace, comfort, and courage to them, and thus group survival.

In addition to the basic tenents of Judaism, the rituals, and the Sabbath, there developed other solidifying factors among the early Jews the most important of which were circumcision, the dietary laws, the prohibition of connubium and commensality

with other groups and the family and educational systems. The combination of these factors plus the pressures to which they were subjected resulted in the existence and persistence of Judaism and the Jewish community group. It is agreed by most students of this subject that, as far as Jewish communal group solidarity and survival are concerned, the life which approximates the ghetto social system has proved the most desirable. One thing is certain, when the post emancipation Jewish communal structure is analyzed as a multi-dimensional pattern of events in space and time it reveals a high degree of disintegration both within its component parts as well as between it and the larger community, with the result that in general the Diaspora Jews of recent times have not had any basic belief system which could be grasped with certainty and around which they could organize life and culture.[13]

It appears desirable in order to examine and appraise the status of the three communal structures under consideration to single out the most critically significant content of the old system and use it as a measuring rod in evaluating and establishing the condition of those communities. That basic content appears as follows: a particular religious system with its ideal of an eternal mission; the Sabbath and all of its implications; an educational system, the emphasis of which is Judaism and a Jewish way of life; and the group consciousness resulting from elements arising from within the group and from pressures external to the group.

It is the thesis of this project that, in those Jewish communities where the above content is intensified and is an intimate part of the social framework, there the communal group is well integrated; however, if it is not intensified and is not basic to the social framework it leads to social apathy, stagnation, and ultimate extinction.

The Clinton Community

This rather full-length dynamic picture of the origin, nature, and changes of the general Jewish community group in its various environmental settings throws significant light on the pattern of behavior as it occurred within the Jewish group in Clinton. To that microcosmic Jewish world the sudden collapse of its

economy must have been a serious crisis which can be conceived only as the manifestation of a critical unbalance in the culture of that group. It is hard to dissuade oneself that the facts and figures and the complex pattern of behavior of the Jewish group in Clinton have not significant meaning beyond themselves. It is no simple matter for an entire group to leave a community within the period of a few years in which it existed for sixty years on what was evidently very successful terms. It goes without saying that a prime reason for the exodus was economic in nature, yet one is inclined to feel that there were other processes and mechanisms which contributed to the disequilibrium or disintegration of this particular social system.[14] It is difficult to demonstrate fully the validity of this proposition, particularly since the element of time has cast such a fog of sentiment, as well as disillusionment, over the entire scene as to blur much of the realities. Nevertheless, from a careful appraisal and analysis of the overall picture one may possibly derive certain estimates of those contributing factors.

The very fact that the Jews of Clinton left their businesses and friends of long standing indicates clearly that, aside from their economic ties, there were no other very serious interests there for them. Contrary to common belief, Jews do not move in pursuit of profit alone, rather have they clung to their homes with pitiful persistence so long as that home meant spiritual and social security.[15] One can cite innumerable cases of Jews who had very successful businesses but left them to search for more desirable communities in which to live.[16] Apparently the Jews of Clinton were what might be termed a sort of a community catalytic agent, helping to create something new but never themselves a part of that which was created. It has been shown that the Jews enjoyed great freedom in that community. that they participated in many communal activities, and that they were quite devoted to the larger community interests and yet their ultimate behavior indicates that they had no real roots there, that they were not truly an intimate part of that community. They were, in fact, "strangers" there.[17] Georg Simmel points out in this connection that:

> The stranger is by nature no 'owner of soil' — not merely in the physical sense but in the figurative sense of a life-substance, which is fixed, if not in a point of space at least in an ideal point of the social environment. Although in more intimate relations, he may develop all kinds of charm and significance, as long as he is considered a stranger in the eyes of the others, he is not an 'owner of soil.' Restricted to intermediary trade, and often (as though sublimated from it) to pure finance, gives him the specific character of mobility.[18]

Two particular traits of behavior stand out in connection with the phenomenon of Clinton: (1) that despite the free environment in which they existed the Jews of Clinton did not in any sense assimilate and (2) that they did not show any indications of establishing a meaningful Jewish group life. The history of the community shows that only two individuals married out of the faith during the sixty years of the life of that group and that, despite their interest and activities in Christian churches, there is no record of one Jew actually becoming a member of such a church. On the other hand, it is also quite clear that in the life of that communal group there was not one overt manifestation of those factors which make for integrated Jewish group life.

Werner Sombart makes an important observation when he says that no term is more familiar to the ear of the Jew than *tachlis,* which means purpose, aim, or goal. If a Jew is to do anything he must have a *tachlis;* life itself, whether as a whole or in its single activities, must have some *tachlis.* In fact for the Jew the entire universe must have *tachlis.*[19]

It would appear that the Jews of Clinton possessed no real goal as far as the larger community was concerned. Had they, on the one hand become assimilated they might have remained as part of the larger community when the economic crisis came, while on the other hand, had they had the support of a Jewish community group to keep them together they might have remained in Clinton as a Jewish group within the fabric of the larger community. Therefore, when the economic crisis came to Clinton the individual Jews, having failed to assimilate in the

general community, having no strong ties to their Jewish locality grouping, the *raison d'etre* for their presence being cut off, they simply left.

The Opelousas Community

An analysis of the Jewish communal group of Opelousas indicates two distinct processes at work, or possibly two phases of a single process. On the one hand, may be seen the slow disintegration of the group and, on the other hand, may be seen the process of assimilation in action. It is assumed in this connection that the degree of community group demoralization has been in direct proportion to the degree of de-Judaization of the group, and also that the degree of assimilation has been in direct proportion to the degree of disintegration of the group.

For many reasons (which have been discussed in the chapter on the Opelousas Community) those factors which give strength, and meaning, and staying power to a Jewish community slowly but inevitably disappeared from that particular group resulting in the dissolution and destruction of the group.

Just as has been the case in Clinton and in most communities, particularly in the South, the Opelousas Jews enjoyed much freedom of thought and action. At the turn of the century they displayed much of that zeal for Jewish life which has been so important in the survival of Judaism. They participated in religious activities, and made some effort at an educational program. They celebrated the various festivals, and they organized group programs and activities, and in general displayed enthusiastic interest in things Jewish with the result that for a time they possessed a strong Jewish communal group and a continued Jewish life. However, as time passed the smallness of the group, coupled with the cultural pressures from without, began to weaken the structure of the communal group. At first there was the abandonment of the Sabbath, next the diminishing use of Hebrew in prayer. This was followed by the weakening of religious observance, and by a drop in community adherence, and, finally, by the dilution of Jewish education – all of the above the foundation of Jewish survival in previous crises. With the

loss of this portion of the ideological content of the structure naturally went the external form and protection of the religious difference and one of the most important of all survival factors: the concept of God's chosen people.

Under these circumstances it was understandable that the group developed a passion to be like the majority in the midst of which it lived, and much of what was non-Jewish was assimilated, with the result that Jewish distinctiveness began to disappear and social distance to diminish. Finally, that traditional moral code of Judaism which forms a logically integrated canon that serves as a standard for personal conduct and at the same time an unwritten code for the entire group became so diluted that the assimilation process very easily manifested itself. Mrs. Braden's story about her own family makes this entire process crystal clear.[20] And while one quotation does not make a final proof, this particular quotation appears to be more than one quotation. This Jewish mother's description and analysis of the ideological and cultural changes within her family group can be considered as an unusually precise and direct formulation of a process expressed in principle by sociologists, anthropologists, rabbis, and lay Jews and Gentiles. The essence of this formula is plain. A small group of Jews living in an isolated fashion from the larger Jewish community, existing in a relatively free atmosphere, yet feeling keenly their marginal position and being unable to uphold a strong communal structure from which corporate body each member might possibly draw strength, inspiration, and sanctity, soon becomes over-burdened and confused and soon ceases to maintain its peculiar ways and its distinctive moral and social outlook.

Very few Jews have moved away from Opelousas, although they faced there from time to time economic crises as business people do in all communities. In most cases they weathered these crises, or if they failed they started over again, but the great majority remained to live out their lives in that community. However, side by side with the disintegration of the Jewish communal structure, could be found an increase of the psychosocial isolation of the individual Jews from the group. What remained of Judaism was a Judaism composed of resentment,

not strong enough to prevent the members of the group from leaving the faith, nor sufficiently binding to enable them to continue as a going concern; a truncated Judaism with but little staying force and consequently with but little creative power.

In the light of the observed facts and tendencies as indicated in the experience of the Opelousas group there seems to be no other position to take than to state that most probably in another generation the Jewish communal group there will become extinct.

The New Iberia Community

It is indeed a far cry from the ghetto-like community of east Europe to the Jewish group in New Iberia, and it is safe to say that the people of those old communities would hardly recognize the Jews of New Iberia as co-religionists or that the Jews of New Iberia have ever caught more than a faint gleam of the spiritual faith and ethical self-enrichment experienced by their ghetto brethren. Nevertheless, a careful analysis of the history, nature, and character of that phenomenon termed the Jewish community will indicate that these two communal groups, so widely separated in time and space, do possess characteristics in common no matter how unrecognizable at first glance. The characteristics referred to spring, of course, from the religious base which was responsible for the existence of that ghetto-like community and which is today responsible for the existence of the New Iberia community.

One must not for one moment assume that the Jewishness of New Iberia approximates the dynamic pattern of action recommended by such outstanding leaders in Jewish life as Mordecai M. Kaplan,[21] Milton Steinberg,[22] Waldo Frank,[23] Trude Weiss Rosmarin,[24] Louis Finkelstein,[25] Ludwig Lewisohn,[26] Stephen S. Wise,[27] and others.

On the other hand, it is very important to understand also that neither is it merely a moldering heap of sentiment, vanity, arrogance mixed with humility, and vague traditions. Today, at any rate, the Jewish group of New Iberia shows clear indica-

tions of being a rather well organized, and well integrated going concern, within the framework of the "ideal-typical" Jewish community as it now exists in the United States.

The status of the New Iberia community, however, is not the result of some mysterious external force but of some very definite factors which have been operating, often at great odds, for the last fifty years. It so happens that since the turn of the century there have been residing in the New Iberia area an unusually large number of Jews who have felt and still feel that Jewishness still has worth in the world and who have had the will to give of themselves to prove it. This attitude, coupled with their particular background, training, and strength of character, has enabled them to supply the leadership necessary to create the key institutions and agencies indispensable to an integrated and surviving Jewish communal group. This creative minority, although often skeptical and sometimes desperate, has nevertheless, by virtue of its thought, action, and planning, given Jewishness rhyme and reason, and has furthermore helped build tangible support for its ideas and ideals. As the result of this leadership, a structural pattern has been established in that community which, although not strictly comparable to the well-integrated Jewish communities of the middle ages, does demonstrate some of the factors which have been established in this book project as being necessary for the continued existence of a Jewish communal group. The synagogue, the social center, the B'nai B'rith Lodge, the Sisterhood, the Zionist interests, the philanthropic and social activities coupled with regular services, festival celebrations, a well organized educational program, and the inspiration and guidance of its leadership have brought to that Jewish group a sense of identity, solidarity, and well-being not found in many comparable communities.

There is compelling evidence that here are Jews, in a small group, who are unified not merely by a meaningless holding-on of things once created for them, but rather by an effort to create something of their own future. They do not seek to alienate themselves from Judaism nor do they wish to merge blindly with the larger community. They have remained in many respects a distinct group, but somehow they do not appear

irritatingly distinct, because their values are not radically different from the values of their host, the larger community. Yet they do not deny nor ignore the validity of their own religion or cultural tradition. In brief, their Jewishness is something positive with them and not a senseless identification, as in the case of many of their co-religionists in this area. This group of Jews has developed what appears to be a dynamic accommodation of Jewish life-values to a non-Jewish environment.

By virtue of their attitudes, the Jews of the New Iberia community appear less susceptible to the infection of self-hatred[28] so common among the Jews everywhere, except possibly those who live in Israel.[29] They have been and are still, undeniably and contrary to the protestations of the non-Jews, exposed to the self-same psychological influences which were experienced by the Jews of Clinton and of Opelousas, but in their case, participation in and appreciation of Jewish tradition and values, plus the feeling of group consciousness, have operated as a sort of immunizing element. These Jews do not appear tempted to flight either from Judaism or from themselves. They seem, at this point, to be able to inhabit a culturally pluralistic world, and there do exist two cultural worlds even in New Iberia. These individuals move with such naturalness from one area to the other that neither they nor any one else is unusually aware of the change in religious and cultural locale.

Thus the Jews of New Iberia have been able, for the time being at least, to halt the process of communal disintegration and have brought to the individual members of their particular group a meaningful Jewish way of life. They have been able to achieve this by giving vital significance to those elements of Judaism which have for centuries been responsible for its survival.

There remains now the task of comparing *the basic* elements of the three communities just described to the "ideal-typical" or composite community established in Chapter III. The elements which are crucial to this comparison are (1) the nature of community development, (2) the occupation and economic structure, (3) community organization, and (4) social status.

In their historical development Opelousas and New Iberia approximate the "ideal-typical" community, while Clinton does not. In the case of Opelousas and New Iberia, the early arrivals made efforts to establish a communal life, to build a house of worship, to organize social life and activities, to establish a program of religious education, and to hold religious services on the Sabbath as well as on the special religious festivals. The history of Clinton indicates, as far as has been ascertained, that no efforts were made in this direction.

In the matter of occupation and economic structure the Opelousas and New Iberia communities also approximate closely the patterns found in the "ideal-typical" community. The Jews of these two groups rank above the middle class. The largest number of both native and foreign-born individuals are engaged in trades; however, as is the case in the "ideal-typical" community, there is evidence that there is a definite trend away from business and into the professions on the part of the native born. The situation in Clinton differed to some degree. There the Jews also ranked above the middle class economically but all of the employed members of the group were in business.

As far as it is known the Jews of Clinton established no programs which could be termed community organizations.[30] The Jews of Opelousas and New Iberia, on the other hand, made serious efforts at organizing such programs. Both groups built synagogues, established fraternal organizations for both men and women, organized religious education, and participated in planned social gatherings.

Concerning the Jewish group in Clinton lack of data precludes appraisal of their social status. There is evidence, however, to substantiate the statement that as groups the Jews of Opelousas and New Iberia lack recognized status just as the Jews of the "ideal-typical" lack it. Furthermore, as in the case of the "ideal-typical" community, many Jews of Opelousas and New Iberia feel keenly their marginal position and experience the feeling of insecurity which is associated with such state of mind.

Finally, the Jews who are left in Opelousas and those who are residing in New Iberia are well aware of the fact that the Jewish communities in this area are rapidly becoming secular

rather than religious in character, just as is the case of the "ideal-typical" community, and that Jewish communities cannot long exist on such a foundation.

NOTES

1. Rosmarin, *op. cit.*, p. 185.
See also M. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-10, also Lester F. Ward, *Pure Sociology* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 91, who says "my thesis is that the subject matter of sociology is human achievement. It is not what men are but what they do. It is not structure but function."

2. Lewisohn, *op. cit.*, p. 2. Quoting a famous Jewish scholar in Germany, Martin Buber.

3. Everett V. Stonequist, an essay in Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

4. In Cairo, Egypt there is still an inscription written nearly 4000 years ago which reads: "We have uprooted Israel. Their seed is no more." See also Trude W. Rosmarin, *Jewish Survival* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949); Ludwig Lewisohn, *The American Jew* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Company, 1950); Lewisohn, *Israel* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925); Milton Steinberg, *A Partisan Guide to the Jewish Problem* (New York: The Bobbs-Merril Company, 1945); Stephen S. Wise, *As I See It* (New York: Jewish Opinion Publishing Company, 1944); Louis Finkelstein, "A Trumpet for All Israel," *Time,* (October 15, 1951), p. 59.

5. Carl Meyer, "Religious and Political Aspects of Anti-Judaism," an essay in Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.*, p. 316. While this writer recognizes that there exist factors in the phenomenon he is attempting to study which appear inexplicable to him and which he may perhaps personally notice and appreciate, he cannot in this thesis project take a position based on pious hopes but one based on facts and trends the analysis of which has more validity in the present context. As a matter of fact, many modern Jews are inclined to question the notion that Jews are God's chosen people with a world mission, recognizing that hoary tribalism as a compensatory belief of a sorely oppressed group.

6. Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.*, pp. 102, 240, 304, 317. See also M. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. XV; Berkson, *op. cit.*, p. 96; Lewisohn, *Israel, op. cit.*, p. 115; Rosmarin, *op. cit.*, pp. 65, 99, 101, 164; Zborowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-52; Georg Simmel, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel,* Translated by Kurt H. Wolff, (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950), p. 191; Richard C. Snyder and H. Hubert Wilson, *Roots of Political Behavior* (New York: American Book Company, 1949), p. 166.

7. Simmel, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

8. Rosmarin, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-194.

9. Rabbi Jacob D. Schwartz, *The Synagogue in Modern Jewish Life* (Cincinnati: Commission on Synagogue Activities, 1939), p. 1.

10. The synagogue was known as the house of worship, the house of study, and the house of assembly.

11. Part ofthe weekly services for the Sabbath in *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship* (Cincinnati: The Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1947), p. 31, is as follows: "Blessed be the Sabbath, the queen of days, which brings unto Israel enrichment of soul. Even as Israel has kept the Sabbath, so the Sabbath has kept Israel."

12. Rabbi Alan S. Green, *A Set of Holiday Sermons* (Cincinnati: The Tract Commission, 1941), p. 22.

13. Wise, *op. cit.*, p. 28. Rabbi Wise, who is without question one of the most outstanding Jewish leaders of the day, says that emancipation has been the main disintegrating force in Jewish life and that one of the tragic by-products of the last century in Jewish life has been the fanatical quest of the Jews for withdrawal from all that is Jewish because "the world bade him be free from chains and bonds." See also Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. xv. Joseph Kastein, *History and Destiny of the Jews* (New York: Viking Press, 1933), p. 372; Lewisohn, *op. cit.*, p. 34; Steinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 115; Rosmarin, *op. cit.*, p. 80; R. E. Park, *Race and Culture*, p. 378; Perez F. Bernstein, *Jew Hate as A Sociological Problem* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), pp. 282-283; Kurt Lewin, "Self Hatred Among Jews," an essay in *Race Prejudice and Discrimination*, Arnold M. Rose (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 321; Bernard, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

14. Talcott Parsons and Edward A. Shils, (eds.), *Toward a General Theory of Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 227, claim that "the equilibrium of social systems is maintained by a variety of processes and mechanisms and their failure precipitates varying degrees of disequilibrium (or disintegration). The two main classes of mechanisms by which motivation is kept at the level and in the direction necessary for the continuing operation of the social system are the mechanisms of socialization and the mechanism of social control."

15. Miriam Beard, "Anti-Semitism — Product of Economic Myth," an essay in Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.*, p. 375

16. A good example of this situation is found in Bryan, Texas where the writer lived as a child. Thirty years ago there existed a large and rather well organized Jewish group, with an active synagogue, a B'nai B'rith Lodge, a Sisterhood and a Sunday School program. Today that communal group has completely disappeared. Only in one case was there intermarriage. That family still lives there. All the other families moved away to larger and more active Jewish communities, but in not one case was the reason economic.

17. Simmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 402-408, believes that to be a stranger is a very positive relation; it is a specific form of interaction. "He is a potential wanderer . . . . he is fixed within a particular spatial group . . . . but his position in this group is determined, essentially, by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning, that he imports qualities into it, which do not and cannot stem from the group itself."

18. *Ibid.*, p. 403.

19. Sombart, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

20. See discussion in Chapter V.

21. M. Kaplan, *op. cit., passim.*

22. Steinberg, *op. cit., passim.*

23. Waldo Frank, *The Jew in Our Day* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944).

24. Rosmarin, *op. cit., passim.*

25. Finkelstein, (ed.), *op. cit., passim.*

26. Lewisohn, The American Jew, *op. cit.*

27. Wise, *op. cit., passim.*

28. Kurt Lewin, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-322, states "that self-hatred is present among Jews is a fact that the non-Jew would hardly believe, but which is well known among the Jews themselves. This is a phenomenon which has been observed ever since the emancipation of the Jew . . . . it is both a group phenomenon and an individual phenomenon." For a further discussion of this phenomenon, see John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937), p. 441.

29. Thomas Sugrue, *Watch For The Morning* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), pp. 23-24, in speaking of the Jews who are natives of Israel explains that since they have rarely experienced anti-Semitism they are therefore psychologically free; they reflect no tension, no self-consciousness, no concern for what others are thinking of them. They are relaxed, happy in their lives, and in love with their land. They do not even resemble the Jews of the Exile. Although some might disagree, this hypothesis might well bear further investigation.

30. For a detailed discussion of Jewish community organization see Maurice J. Karpf, *Jewish Community Organization in the United States* (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1938).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Summary and Conclusion

In this book an attempt has been made to describe and to analyze the unique phenomenon known as the Jewish community, and having established what may conveniently be termed the "ideal-typical" type of Jewish community in the United States special attention has been focused upon the history, development, character, and social change which has occurred in three selected communities.

The situation in which the Jews of America find themselves at present is "woefully abnormal and startlingly unprecedented."[1] as described by many oustanding Jewish leaders. These individuals agree that there has been a widespread assimilation of Jewish culture to every phase of the general culture, with the result that American Jewry as a group is showing distinct signs of disintegration and the individual members of that group are suffering psychologically from the effects of this loss of orientation. Thus it is that the Jews in America are today confronted with a peculiar problem of survival. It stems not from pressures as has been the case in other lands and at other times but rather from omissions and commissions[2] of their own making within the framework of their communal life. The concensus among students of this matter appears to be then that the question of Jewish survival or Jewish extinction is to be found in the nature of Jewish communal life. It has been attempted in this investigation, through the use of empirical instances to establish some basic characteristics of Jewish communal structure and function which may be used to evaluate the conditions of any given Jewish com-

munal group and to measure its degree of integration or disintegration.

The history of the Jews in the United States reflects not only Jewish personalities but also their cultural environment and the development of Jewish communal life. It may be said that the history of Jewish life in America is essentially the history of three distinct tides of immigration. The first group to arrive was made up of Sephardic Jews who came directly from Spain and Portugal or indirectly by way of Holland and South America. At the turn of the nineteenth century a large and steady German group began migrating to this country and increased perceptibly after the reaction to the post-Waterloo era and the failure of the liberal revolution in 1848. In 1860 began the great movement of the Polish, Russian, and Roumanian group. The Slavic immigrants, who numbered more than two and one-half million by 1914 completely submerged the other groups and profoundly influenced American Jewish life.

The American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights had special meaning for the Jews of that day; they all implied a new social outlook for those who were searching for religious and political freedom. Jews were particularly vocal in their insistence on equality. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites, for instance, was an agency organized for the protection of Jewish rights, an avowed advocate of equality, and an eager guardian for maintaining the position and status of Jews in America and abroad.

Estimates of the number of Jews in America have always been haphazard. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were believed to be approximately three thousand Jews in the United States. By 1847 it was estimated that the number had grown to fifty thousand. Up to that point there had been no hard and fast distinction among Jews on the basis of origin. A very definite distinction began to manifest itself only after the migration on the part of Jews from Germany and from east Europe. The break appeared to be inevitable. The old Jewish settlers found that the newcomers from Germany were quite different from them in manners, language, and attitudes, and even in religious rituals. The result of this breach was that the German

Jews soon seceded completely from the organized congregations of American Jewry and established congregations and communal groups of their own. The most serious implication of this division within Jewry was the establishment of two distinct religious movements, Orthodoxy and Reform, which were to play very important roles in the communal life of Jews in America. It is important to note that many of the German immigrants settled in the South and the West.

The phases of economic life of the Jewish settlers in the middle and later years of the nineteenth century were manifold. There were the peddlers who began with a few commodities which they could carry on their backs. Soon, however, they settled in some isolated community. As they began to prosper they would send for their families and friends. Gradually a little Jewish community would evolve and with it a form of social organization. Thus, were there soon scattered over the entire United States small Jewish communal groups, each making an effort to live a Jewish life. Strict observance of religious life plus the closeness of the family life enabled the Jews to overcome many of the vicissitudes of that existence and to survive as Jews.

In 1850 the mass migration began from Poland. It rose higher when the emancipation of the Russian serfs created an economic crisis in Russia which compelled thousands of Jews to migrate to the United States. Early in the eighties the violent pogroms in Russia sent tens of thousands of Jews rushing toward the American shores. Whole communities migrated en masse, and more than twenty thousand Jews entered the United States annually. By 1900 the two hundred thousand Jews of Sephardic and German origin were completely inundated by nearly two million immigrants from the east European countries. The newcomers migrated as whole communities, bringing with them a well developed group conciousness and, desiring to live together, they formed huge ghettos in the metropolitan areas of the eastern part of the United States.

The first two centuries of American experience were almost wholly free of expression of hostility to the Jews. In the early life of America, social and economic conditions were such that there was little room for religious prejudice. However, with

the arrival of great masses of immigrants and with their rapid rise in economic areas, there began to be evidence of prejudice against them. As in every manifestation of prejudice the Jew was in the same category as members of all minority groups; however, his exceptional mobility and his outstanding religious differences made him the more prominent and more vulnerable target.

Since 1900 the Jewish community has risen from three and one-half million to over five million. In these fifty years it has extended its role in every sphere of the nation's life. In the religious and cultural sphere, this era witnessed an intensification of effort on the part of every Jewish group to expand, although the centrifugal forces, reflected in the general tendency toward secularization and in the urge to total assimilation, took a heavy toll, especially in the smaller communities scattered throughout the land.

Louisiana was prevented in its early years from encouraging the growth of Jewish communities because it had to contend with Bienville's "Black Code" which excluded Jews from this colony. It was not until after 1803 that Jews were permitted to migrate to this area. The first group of Jews established a congregation in Louisiana in 1826 and the state approved their charter in 1828. That congregation survives today in New Orleans as Touro Synagogue. The second synagogue organized in Louisiana was founded in 1845. By this time there were approximately 125 Jewish families living in New Orleans.

In the parishes outside of New Orleans records of organized Jewish activities do not begin until the 1850's, although there were individual Jews scattered throughout many of the Louisiana communities.

Today there are approximately 14,000 Jews in this state. It has been estimated that Jews in groups of ten or more reside in as many as fifty communities throughout Louisiana.

Jewish community has become an equivocal concept since it embodies the wide variety of meanings attached in anthropological, juristic, and sociological literature to the term community. The complexity of the connotation has been increased by the uncertainties associated with the adjective "Jewish" and by those characteristics which tend to give the Jewish community a uni-

versal quality. The definition which appears to describe most adequately the Jewish community is that one given by R. M. MacIver wherein he states that a community is "any circle of people who live together, who belong together, so that they share, not this or that particular interest, but a whole set of interests wide enough and common enough to include their lives." The basic denominator which has been responsible for the creation of and which has held the Jewish community together has been and is today a Jewish culture, the essence of which is religion. The Jewish religion has been both the outstanding characteristic and the chief dynamic force of the peculiar Jewish way of life.

The Jewish community in America today reflects in various degrees many of the characteristics developed in the ghetto period which approximated very closely the characteristics of a folk society. The Jews of the European ghetto had a strong sense of belonging together; they were much alike; they were isolated and thus were homogeneous with a strong sense of group solidarity. As the consequence of such conditions they developed a system of ideas which is now known as a Jewish culture. The basic elements of that culture were the development of an elaborate religious system, an educational system, and a family system.

In order to facilitate the description and analysis of any selected Jewish community it appeared important to establish what might be termed an "ideal-typical" Jewish community through the use of the conceptual tool the "ideal type" made famous by Max Weber.

The earliest progenitors of such an "ideal-typical" Jewish community were German Jews who arrived about the year 1850. These Jews were at the outset predisposed to business and trade, the professions and shopkeeping; and they were eager to conform to the American standards of living and to become integrated into the American cultural pattern. The east European Jews who followed them at the turn of the twentieth century made some effort, in the beginning, to develop a form of self segregation. The center of their lives was the synagogue and for many years they maintained their European customs in their homes

and synagogue. These Jews were prone to go into industry. As time passed the two groups began to find many elements in common with the result that a United Jewish community became established. At present the Jewish community composes approximately two per cent of the total general population. The great majority of its population is American born. Today the Jewish population resides in all parts of the general community, that is, in accordance with their economic status. It may be said further that, in general, the "ideal-typical" Jewish community displays most of the middle class characteristics.

The occupational pattern of Jews has been a source of much discussion. The "ideal-typical" Jewish community indicates several clear-cut characteristics of this pattern. In the first place, the largest concentration of employers and self-employed are to be found in trade and in the professions. However, it is worthy of note that the community picture also shows that gradually the relative number of Jewish employees is increasing, while the percentage of Jewish employers is decreasing.

In the area of community organization the following basic elements are to be found in the Jewish community: the synagogue (often called a Temple), a cemetery association, a men's lodge, a women's sisterhood, a community center, and an educational program. It is important to note that today the synagogue and the religious leaders have been relegated to a secondary position in Jewish communal affairs.

Most students of contemporary Jewish life in America agree that the Jews of the "ideal-typical" community are today without any real recognized status, the result of which is a lack of a meaningful religious philosophy and a successful program of Jewish life.

The survey of the three selected communities indicates communities at three distinct states of social change.

The Jewish community in Clinton had its conception in the early 1840's. By 1890 there were living in Clinton eighty-five Jewish individuals. All of the Jews of that community were in businesses, dealing in general merchandising and buying and selling cotton. The Jewish merchants operated large up-to-date stores and were considered very successful. They were accepted

as important members of the business community as well as of the general community.

The Jewish people of Clinton from the very beginning became a well-integrated part of the total community. They built attractive homes and participated in all civic activities, and very quickly became conditioned to the Clinton way of life. However, contrary to the condition existing in many other Jewish communities, the Clinton Jews made little effort to organize a Jewish communal life. They did not build a synagogue, they had no fraternal organizations, they participated in no educational program, and they held religious services only infrequently. In short, there appears to have been little identification with Jewish life and activity on the part of the Jews of Clinton.

In 1907 a serious economic crisis developed in the Clinton area which affected the Jews as it did all citizens. The result was immediate exodus of Jews and by 1910 the entire Jewish group had disappeared from Clinton.

The Jewish community of Opelousas differs essentially from that of Clinton in two respects. At the very outset the Jewish immigrants to Opelousas established themselves more firmly within the fabric of the larger community. Many of them owned and operated farms, others made their way into the professions, and still others became a part of the banking business. At the same time that they were taking root in the larger community, they were making a concerted effort to establish a Jewish group life.

The first Jews arrived in Opelousas in the 1850's and the community grew in size until in 1885 there were over one hundred Jewish persons residing there. In 1865 the Jews of that community established a cemetery and in 1877 they organized a congregation which held services regularly in the Masonic Lodge Hall. On the high holy days a rabbi was invited to conduct the services. Subsequently a synagogue was built and a B'nai B'rith Lodge and a Sisterhood established.

Today in the Opelousas area there are only thirty-six individuals who consider themselves Jews in any sense at all. These are well educated, in the upper financial bracket, largely over thirty years of age, and for the most part, unmarried. These indi-

viduals find themselves no longer a part of an organized communal group and, furthermore, they are all convinced that in another generation the Jewish group in Opelousas will become extinct as a community. In the last thirty-five years the Jewish people of Opelousas have seen their own culture and religious traditions slipping away. During this period there was a great deal of marriage outside of the faith. At the same time an abnormal number of Jews there did not marry at all. The reason for this general decline and disintegration of the group appears to be the loss of specific elements which have been responsible for the integration of Jewish communal groups everywhere. These are a weakening of the religious structure, replacement of traditionally Jewish cultural traits by American traits, a lack of Jewish education, a lack of fraternal organizations, and finally a paucity of Jewish individuals.

The New Iberia community presents a different phenomenon from the other two communities studied. The basic difference in the background of this particular community may be found in the character of the individuals who originally settled this community and who subsequently migrated there. In the first place, more east European Jews found their way to New Iberia, and, in the second place, its leadership seems to have been better equipped to create those elements which resulted in a more integrated communal group. This community has shown a slow but steady rise in its population in the last fifty years. There are several basic reasons for this: there has been very little marriage out of the faith, a great majority of the Jews there have married, those who marry remain as part of the Jewish group, and there have been very few cases of individuals who have moved away. The economic structure of that group indicates that its members have achieved a comparatively high status. Worthy of note in this connection is the fact that thirty-five per cent of the employed are not in business.

The Jews of New Iberia feel that they have been able to create a social existence for themselves which for the present has proved successful. They have been well accepted by the community at large, yet they have been able at the same time to preserve enough of Jewish distinctiveness to act as a cohesive

force within communal group structure. Their communal organizations have, on the one hand, made Judaism more meaningful to them and, on the other hand, they have given them a wholesome feeling of belonging and of self-respect. At the present time the Jewish group in New Iberia shows no indication of giving up their Jewish individuality or of merging with the general population. However, the small creative group of leaders who have largely been responsible for the present state of the Jewish community fully realize that if the group loses its identity with Judaism, relinquishes its communal organizations, and fails to develop able and inspired leadership it will immediately begin to disintegrate and ultimately become extinct.

Any attempt to reach conclusions regarding the findings within this thesis project must be prefaced with a word of caution. Many students of history and sociology as well as of religion believe that the Jewish experience cannot adequately be explained in a "purely human way."[3] Carl Mayer, writing on the "Religious and Political Aspects of Anti-Judaism"[4] states that "the 'Jewish problem' is ultimately inexplicable, that is, incapable of theoretical solution and thus impervious to rational analysis. It can be stated, described, and analyzed insofar as its external manifestations are concerned but it cannot be explained."

Despite the position taken by Professor Mayer and by many theologians, both Jewish and Christian, it appears that the empirical instances described in the survey of the three selected Jewish communities do lend themselves to the establishment of several basic conclusions, at least within a sociological frame of reference. The general conclusions reached in the course of this study deal with: (1) the nature of the small Jewish community, (2) the influence of this community upon the attitudes and behavior of the individual Jews within it, and (3) the character of the social changes occurring within the structure of such a community.

The sociological structure of the communities studied, or for that matter, the Jewish communities found anywhere in the world can be understood adequately only in the light of the sociological basis of the origin of these communities. The point of origin has been the powerful and dynamic force known as the Jewish re-

ligion. The basic aim of this force has been and is to mold a special type of social existence for its followers. The result of this force has been a "cultural compulsion"[5] which has kept the Jews as a distinct cultural group for two thousand years.

The emancipation catapulted the Jews into the modern era. In a generation it carried them over a span of five hundred years of history and scattered them into the strangely free atmosphere of many small communities in the United States. Thus it is, that in the Jewish communities specifically examined as well as in the many more generally observed, the Jewish groups find that the emancipation which, in a sense, has proved for them a flattering illusion, has broken the Jews' belief in themselves and their mission and therewith their real will to exist as Jews.[6]

The Jews in the small communities observed by this writer find themselves wanting to live according to a certain cultural pattern but in some cases they are without the communal structure to hold them together or to give them the protection needed to live according to a culture which is distinctive. As a group the Jews find it very difficult to break with their past nor are they ever quite accepted into the larger society. Thus they remain, par excellence, the eternal strangers.[7] In general, they live in two worlds—a little disillusioned in both.[8] They have no real world of their own because the ideological system of the ghetto which was responsible for the survival of the Jewish world in the first place, fails to solve the intellectual and moral perplexities by which the modern American Jew is beset. On the other hand, the world of the larger community is not quite their own because despite the fact that it may admire and tolerate them, it feels eternally irritated at their stubborn persistence in being different and treats them, at best, as guests. Being loyal and neighborly has not helped, living together in the same town for a hundred years has not helped, speaking the same language and venerating the same national heroes and institutions have not helped.[9] Even when the lines between the Jewish and the Gentile communities become very thin, the Jews still find themselves far from constituting full fledged members of the general community and their positions remain one of ambivalence.[10]

Thus the small Jewish community approximates a cultural island, with but very few of the communal organizations available to give the group a feeling of togetherness, value, or staying power. As a group it has little status, and its social location appears to lie somewhere between that of the foreign ethnic group and that of the Negro in America. Raymond Kennedy describes the Jewish communal group as "a religio-national group occupying the status of a quasi-caste in American society."[11]

The result of this condition has been that, in general, the Jewish communal groups are gradually creating a Judaism that is inconspicuous and one which is surviving only as an innocuous concept with few meanings or rights of its own.

Kurt Lewin, Mordecai Kaplan, Jessie Bernard, Perez Bernstein, I. S. Wechsler and many others have described very ably and very graphically the influence which American Jewish life has had upon the individual Jew. Living in an unbalanced and unwholesome environment from birth to death inevitably provokes profound psychological disturbances.[12]

Kurt Lewin explains the process involved here particularly well when he says:[13]

> It is recognized in sociology that members of the lower social strata tend to accept the fashions, values, and ideals of the higher strata. In the case of the underprivileged group it means that their opinions about themselves are greatly influenced by the low esteem the majority has for them . . . . The more typically Jewish people are, or the more typically Jewish a cultural symbol or behavior pattern is, the more distasteful they will appear to this person (the Jew with a negative balance). Being unable to cut himself entirely loose from his Jewish connections and his Jewish past, the hatred turns upon himself. . . .

Self hatred, the feeling of inferiority, petty fears, the sense of moral isolation, and all of the various manifestations of personality conflict are the inevitable result of the drastic overturnings of the customary and the familiar, and of the swift ruptures with the past. "The average modern Jew is ashamed of his Jewishness," says Trude Weiss Rosmarin.[14] "To him Jewish distinct-

iveness is not a badge of honor but a stigma—a misfortune from which he attempts frantically to escape. He is mortally afraid of Jews who insist on being Jews and thus remind the world of the Jewish problem. He wants the world to forget about him."[15] While most of the Jews in the communities observed greatly admire the saintly Rabbi Louis Finkelstein they do not quite agree with him when he suggests that "Jews must see themselves as God intends them to be—His servants and the servants of mankind." Furthermore, they view with some doubt the rabbi's insistence that the covenant God made with the Jews is an inescapable covenant.[16]

The Jews in these small communities live out their lives, on the surface at least, as other people do, but they are never quite normal, never quite at ease, never completely secure, and seldom imbued with the sense of worthwhileness that members of other religious groups are. Outwardly they may be calm but inwardly they are worried. They are, at best, divided beings, each "a Hamlet forever soliloquizing—to be or not to be a Jew."[17]

This condition is quite understandable when one recognizes that it is difficult if not impossible to attach meaning and significance to the notion of personal or social direction and motivation without some secure presuppositions. The ancient Judaic assurances provided these presuppositions, and they no longer exist for the Jews of the vast majority of small communities in the United States.[18]

The status of the small Jewish communal structure and the character of its citizens indicate that a social change is inevitable in the immediate future. Either the group will abandon its Jewishness and assimilate with the larger society or it will return to the fundamentals of Judaism and surround itself with a distinctiveness which will approximate a sort of self-imposed spiritual ghetto. Either course would be preferable to one many Jewish groups are actually following today which is "neither philosophically tenable nor socially practicable—a genteel watering down of Judaism to conform to United States cultural standards."[19]

The facts gathered in this study indicate that in this area, at least, the small Jewish group is in danger of disappearing

through the process of assimilation. In this connection it must be noted that assimilation in the case of the Jew is a gradual process because Judaism is multiple in ingredients, and its elements are dropped singly over a time span ranging from years to generations.

It is true that at present the New Iberia situation is an exception; however, it must be well understood that very unusual circumstances are responsible for that condition. Very few small Jewish communities have the organization and integration found in New Iberia. The Jews of New Iberia are well aware that despite the fact that they have at present worked out a satisfactory formula for living as Jews, their communal structure rests on a thin foundation.[20] The law of diminishing returns has not as yet shown serious signs of affecting that community. However, if that small creative minority which has been responsible for the very life of the community should pass on without being replaced the community structure would begin to show signs of decay. Actually there are no longer any reserves available to replace the European Jews who brought with them the elements making up the very foundation of the Jewish community in the United States.

It is the conclusion of this study that small Jewish communities such as those analyzed in this project will begin to disintegrate and disappear as communal groups in the near future.[21] Many serious and able Jewish and Gentile thinkers[22] have advanced logical arguments and plausible solutions to this seemingly inevitable social trend, but in all cases there are doubts as to their feasibility and effectiveness. The plans, so far presented, seem artifical in that they do not appear to meet adequately the basic needs of Jews. If it is true that the vital sources of Jewish culture are drying up and if it is also true that the reasons for its continual existence are disappearing, then it is very doubtful whether even the most elaborately and carefully worked-out plans will keep it alive very long, much less cause it to flourish.

Periodically Judaism in the United States has shown signs of revival. New and beautiful synagogues spring up, seminaries expand, and congregation memberships increase, but one finds in these facts little indication of a real religious awakening. Less

than one-third of the Jews in America have even the remotest connection with the synagogue.[23] Most of these find the center of their interests as Jews not in religion but in secular concerns such as Zionism, labor unions, philanthropies, and community service. Those who understand the origin and nature of the Jewish community can realize that such a community cannot possibly be rebuilt on a secular rather than a religious basis.

The lack of those traditional elements responsible for Jewish survival in the past and the external pressures imposed by the general American society which does not approve the continual existence within its environment of social groups who retain their distinctive individuality may well result in the gradual disintegration and disappearance of the small Jewish community.

NOTES

1. Mordecai M. Kaplan, *The Future of the American Jew* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), p. 536.

2. Trude W. Rosmarin, *Jewish Survival* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949), pp. 185-186.

3. Carl Mayer, " Religious and Political Aspects of Anti-Judaism," in Isacque Graeber and Steuart H. Britt (eds.), *Jews in a Gentile World* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942), p. 312.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 311.

5. Abraham Myerson, *Speaking of Man* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Company, 1950), p. 155, describes a cultural compulsion as the bias given to theories and ideas by the interests, training, and motivations of the individual.

6. No matter what some Jewish leaders may have to say about the greatness of Judaism of the past or about the imperishable and deathless qualities of the Jewish people, the fact remains that at present the Jews are what they are and not what they once were, and that in the final analysis no epoch or day of history has greater authority than the present epoch or day.

7. Robert E. Park, *Race and Culture* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950), p. 355.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 354.

9. Arnold M. Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

10. Parsons, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

11. Raymond Kennedy, "The Position and Future of the Jews in America," an essay in Graeber and Britt, *op. cit.*, p. 420. See also Kingsley Davis, *et al, Modern American Society* (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1949), p. 478, where the authors observe "that the Jews constitute to some extent an occupational caste."

12. Whether this condition is as real as Jews believe is not the question. They do believe it to be real and as W. I. Thomas has so aptly stated it, "if men define situations as real they are real in their consequences." See also Charles F. Marden, *Minorities in America* (New York: American Book Company, 1952), pp. 417-419.

13. Kurt Lewin, *Resolving Social Conflicts* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), pp. 328-329.

14. Rosmarin, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

15. One of the most outstanding and successful Jews of this area, one who has traveled extensively in Europe as well as in America and who has come into contact with Jews on all economic and social levels is of the opinion that the great majority of Jews, particularly those under fifty years of age, would be greatly pleased if they could somehow escape from their Jewish label.

16. Louis Finkelstein, *Time* (October, 15, 1951), p. 59.

17. Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

18. In this connection see Julian B. Fiebelman, *A Social and Economic Study of the New Orleans Jewish Community* (Philadelphia, 1941), pp. 133-135.

19. David Daiches, *Time* (February 19, 1951), p. 59.

20. The writer is at present undertaking a unique sociological experiment in Lafayette, Louisiana. It is well known that this Jewish communal group has been showing definite signs of falling apart as a unit. A program is now in process whereby it is hoped that this community group will be revitalized. The plan is to introduce into the life of the group those elements basic to survival of any Jewish community. Actually, a new and very beautiful synagogue is being built as well as a social center which will include an auditorium with recreation and dining facilities and a library. In addition, regular weekly religious services are being held and an educational program has been established.

21. Uriah Z. Engelman, "The Jewish Synagogue in the United States," *The American Journal of Sociology,* XLI, (July, 1935), pp. 44-48, 50-51, offers four significant facts which prompt the conclusion that small Jewish communal groups throughout the United States are showing distinct signs of disintegration. Although this article was written in 1935 the findings are basically sound today. The facts mentioned by Engelman are as follows: (1) the existence in the country of a large number of Jewish settlers without congregations; (2) the small-town and rural Jewish population, as far as institutional worship is concerned, is almost entirely religionless; (3) the present demographic trends within the Jewish population of the United States point toward a wide and very thin dispersion over the

countryside of America, away from the cities with organized Jewish religious life; and (4) the number of children receiving a religious Jewish education, in proportion to Jewish adult population, is many times smaller than is the case with any other creed, big or small, in America.

22. M. Kaplan, Bernard, Finkelstein, Steinberg, Lewisohn, Rosmarin, and Elmer Berger, *The Jewish Dilemma* (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1945).

23. M. Kaplan, *op. cit., passim.*

Appendixes

APPENDIX A

A COMPLETE LISTING OF HEADSTONES FOUND AT THE PRESENT TIME (1951) IN THE JEWISH CEMETERY, CLINTON, LOUISIANA

Abe Weill, died Nov. 24, 1885, aged 33 years.

Hannah Weill, died Sept. 14, 1888, aged 74.

Charles Wolf, born May 25, 1843, died Apr. 23, 1899.

Abraham Levy, born May 23, 1819, at Klingenmunster, Ger., died Dec. 16, 1899 at Jackson, La.

Pauline Levy, born Paris, France, Apr. 27, 1846, died Feb. 27, 1893.

Alexander Glucksman, a native of Kablin, Prussia, born Oct. 9, 1833, died Sept. 11, 1891.

Addie Mayer, wife of Leopold E. Mayer, died Nov. 2, 1897.

Leopold E. Mayer, born in Klingenmunster, Rheinpfalz, Ger., Aug. 7, 1857, died June 7, 1895 at Jackson, La.

Edith, daughter of Isidor and Deborah Mayer, born Feb. 3, 1891, died Oct. 22, 1891.

Sanche, wife of Henry Mayer, born Jan. 15, 1851, died June 11, 1892.

Adolph Block, born Jan. 26, 1866, died May 21, 1894.

Rebecca Blum, born 1832, in Essingen, Bavaria, died Dec. 28, 1907 at Clinton, La.

Louis Adler, 1864, 1915.

Samuel Adler, born Sept. 17, 1859, died Apr. 6, 1904.

Henry Meyer, born Bavaria, Germany, Dec. 25, 1844, died April 7, 1921.

Julia Heyman, wife of Joseph Block, died May 4, 1924.

Joseph Block, born Jan. 17, 1830, died July 11, 1910.

Ferdinand Block, born Clinton, La., June 30, 1875, died New Orleans, La., Feb. 2, 1908.

Simon Mayer, born May 7, 1868 in Kallstadt Rhein Pfalz, Ger., died July 14, 1902.

William H. Oppenheimer, born Sept. 26, 1847, in Jackson, La., died Oct. 4, 1872, in Houston, Texas.

Minna Wolf, widow of Henry Oppenheimer, born Dec. 25, 1815 in Polk, Hanover, died Oct. 23, 1889, in Clinton, La.

Mrs. Caroline Adler, born 1830 at Heichelheim Landan Rh Bayn age 23 years.

Israel Adler, from Heichelheim Rheinpfalz Baiern, died May 29, 1851.

Solomon Adler, born Mar. 17, 1829 in Heichelheim, Bavaria, Ger., died Sept. 24, 1888.

Lena Adler, wife of Charles Wolf, born Clinton, La., 1850, died Sept. 23, 1876, at Port Hudson.

Leon Adler, born Jan. 19, 1848, at Clinton, La., died Dec. 21, 1878.

Miss Clara Stein from Mussbach Rheinpfalz Bayern, born Nov. 1831, died Oct. 21, 1853.

Moses Bloom of Essinger Rheinpfalz Bayern, born Sept. 24, 1821, died Nov. 28, 1853.

I. Mayer, born Lainhach, France, died Sept. 5, 1853, age 28 years.

Juleus Levy, born Dec. 29, 1856, died July 21, 1859.

Ophelia, daughter of Abraham Levi, born Jan. 31, 1849, died July 23, 1850.

Solomon Kern, born at Stru-Alsace 1845, died 1858 (marker partly obscured)

Lewis Meyer, from Lernbach Alsace, France, born Mar. 11, 1834, died Oct. 25, 1853, at Clinton, La., age 19 years.

Emanuel Dryfus, from Ingenheim Rheinpfalz Bayern, born Nov. 1820, died Oct. 3, 1853.

Leonhard Wolf, died Nov. 12, 1854.

Jacob Wolf, ans Durkheim in der Rheinpfalz Baiern, Gestorben den 13 Sept. 1857.

Yvette Oppenheimer, wife of Abraham Levy, born Jan. 11, 1827, in Epingen Baden, died Apr. 29, 1877, at Jackson, La.

Emanuel Levy, born July 1, 1854 in Bayon Sara, died Dec. 15, 1881 in Jackson, La.

Hirsch Oppenheimer, gestorbenden 21 und begraben, den 23 April, 1856.

Isaac Levy, born at Diefenbach, Alsace, died Jan. 6, 1886, aged 30.

Rosalie Levy, born Feb. 14, 1865, died Oct. 1, 1889.

Elsie May Heyman, born June 3, 1889, died Nov. 12, 1889.

Emily Heymen, nee Meyer, born July 8, 1808 in Diachbnon, Alsace, died Jan. 23, 1888, in Clinton, La.

Dorothea Reinberg, nee Hiller, born Jan. 2, 1820, at Breslau, Prussia, died Apr. 30, 1884.

Henry Spiro, died Jan. 22, 1884, age 50.

Agatha Wolf, born Oct. 18, 1807, died Sept. 18, 1888.

Sadie Miller, daughter of Simon and Augusta Miller, born May 4, 1884, died Sept. 23, 1884.

Carrie, daughter of Henry and Ernestine Reinberg, born Dec. 1, 1869, died Feb. 6, 1884.

Casper Michael, native of Prussia, died St. Francisville, La. March 24, 1863, age 60 years.

David Levy, born at Williamsport, La., died at Livonia, La., March 21, 1863, age 3 years and six months.

Henry Levi, born Feb. 28, 1859, died July 28, 1866.

David, son of Moses and Mina Haas, born Dec. 8, 1856, died Aug. 12, 1869.

Matilda Reise, wife of Daniel Wolf, born Dec. 9, 1811, died Sept. 23, 1866.

Jacob Frank, from Alsace, born Aug. 2, 1827, died June 20, 1863, at Clinton, La.

Rosalie Reinberg, died Feb. 2, 1864, age 2 years, 6 months, 6 days.

Ella Starn, wife of Levi Starn, born Aug. 1816, in Ger., died Oct. 22, 1881.

Emily Flanacher, died March 15, 1887, age 55.

Matilda Heyman, wife of Jacob Flanacher, died Oct. 24, 1885, age 44.

Newman, eldest son of J. Aronstein and Louisa Ward, born Jan. 4, 1859, died Oct. 1, 1883.

Hattie Levy, born Oct. 27, 1861, at Bayon Sara, died July 6, 1881 at New Orleans, La.

Edith, daughter of Albert and Bertha Mayer, born Dec. 29, 1880, died June 17, 1881.

Infant son of J. and E. Adler, born April 27, 1888, died May 14, 1888.

Abraham Meyer Heyman, born May 16, 1805, in Phalsbourg, Alsace, died July 2, 1879, in Clinton, La.

Harriet, daughter of J. and C. Michal, born Aug. 19, 1871, died Aug. 9, 1875.

Minnie, daughter of Charlotte and Solomon Bloom, born Aug. 28, 1866, died Sept. 15, 1876.

Rebecca Oppeheimer, wife of M. Levy, born Mar. 4, 1823, in Epingen Baden, died June 7, 1874 in Port Hudson.

Gustave Hirsch, born Aug. 31, 1859, died July 22, 1877.

Louisa Ward, wife of J. Aronstein, born May 27, 1842, died Jan. 18, 1877.

Rosalie Weill, wife of Isaac Starn, died May 6, 1874, aged 18 years, 10 months, 22 days.

Beulah Meyer, daughter of Emanuel and Rosa Meyer, born Feb. 14, 1872, died Oct. 19, 1873.

Henry Reinburg, born at Schnoiegel, Prussia, died Aug. 4, 1871, age 44.

Fredricka, wife of J. Block, a native of Germany, died Dec. 17, 1877, aged 43 years.

Amalia Moses, wife of Augustus Worms from Speyer Bavaria, died Sept. 17, 1874.

Alphonse Hirsch, born May 8, 1851, died Sept. 28, 1877.

Solomon Bloom, born at Lamersheim, Bavaria, Jan. 8, 1815, died Oct. 4, 1879, at Jackson, La.

Augustus Worms, from Boulay, France (Born), born April 15, 1809, died July 30, 1879.

Irma Rebecca, daughter of Albert and Bertha Mayer, born Nov. 14, 1878, died June 30, 1879.

Daniel Wolf, native of Ingenheim, Bavaria, died in Clinton, La., Nov. 18, 1872, aged 64 years.

Esther, wife of S. Davis, born May 12, 1863, died Nov. 14, 1900

Simon Davis, born in Russia, a resident of Wilson, La., died at Touro Infirmary, New Orleans, July, 1905.

Julian William Zoller, born Feb. 4, 1868, died Oct. 26, 1906.

Caroline Meyer, wife of Rudolph Garrow, born 1838 in Lathen Rheinfsfalz, Germany, died 1907 in New Orleans, age 69 years.

Rudolph Garrow, born Jan. 3, 1830 in Berlin, Ger., died Jan. 3, 1893 in Baton Rouge, La.

Aaron Seligman, husband of Victoria Aronstein, born Spezerin, Ger., 1849, died Feb. 25, 1908.

Leinmann Franck, died Sept. 30, 5613 A.M.

Dorothy, infant of Simon Mayer and Gertrude Moses, born Dec. 21, 1900, died May 24, 1901.

Lena, child of Abe and Stella Flonacher, born Feb. 15, 1902, died Nov. 14, 1902.

Joseph Flonacher, born in Ger., died Nov. 25, 1905, in New Orleans, age 79.

Leon Frank, in plot marked Labe-Block, born May 21, 1870, died Jan. 20, 1945.

Fannie Bloom, wife of Joseph Hirsch, born Laumersheim, Bavaria, April 21, 1853, died Feb. 15, 1896, in New Orleans.

Sadie, daughter of Joseph and Fannie Hirsch, born Jackson, La., Nov. 11, 1881, died Jan. 23, 1890.

Charlotte Flonacher, nee Hirsch, born at Niederrodern, Alsace, Ger., Oct. 25, 1845, died Feb. 11, 1893.

Jules Labe, born Mar. 1, 1868, died May 21, 1894.

APPENDIX B

A COMPLETE LISTING OF HEADSTONES FOUND AT THE PRESENT TIME (1951) IN THE JEWISH CEMETERY, OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA

I. Isaac, 1875-1937, "May He Rest in Peace."
Edward Lee Loeb, August 16, 1872 - November 7, 1943.
Jacob Frankel, 1858-1941.
Dr. A. M. Haas, Born August 3, 1876, died November 17, 1922.
Emma Loeb Frankel, 1868-1922.
Fannye Loeb Mitchell, 1873-1942.
David Mitchell, 1875-1944.
Emma Roach, wife of Jonas Roos, October 19, 1872, July 6, 1947.
Jonas Roos, May 24, 1873, May 4, 1943.
Celestine Roos Budd, 1875-1932.
Leon Samuel Haas, Born May 7, 1878, Died February 28, 1947.
Mayer Winsberg, 1866-1935.
Joseph Landau, Born March 6, 1867, Died March 18, 1936.
Hattie Siegel, wife of Joseph Landau, age 52, died May 2, 1934.
Julius Stander, Died September 22, 1950, Aged 69 years 6 months.
George Samuel Schiff, November 3, 1904, January 1, 1949.
Israel L. Pressburg, May 27, 1876, February 8, 1933.
Benjamin Riseman, December 27, 1879, October 10, 1931.
Ethel Lerner, October 15, 1858, November 12, 1933.
Dr. Charle A. Goudchaux, February 15, 1871, January 27, 1940.
Abe Siegel, February 16, 1880, March 28, 1949.
Adolphe Jacobs, died April 6, 1950, aged 75 years, 11 months.
Frederick Adolphus Hart, October 28, 1870 - March 9, 1941.
Hannah Hirschman Jacobs, 1881-1943.
Leonce Jacobs, born February 4, 1899 - Died March 13, 1930.
Solomon Jacobs, born February 1839, Died December, 1917
Jonas Jacobs, Beloved son of Sol. Jacobs and Rosa Lucas, Born Jan. 18, 1869 - Died April 2, 1907.
Yetta Jacobs, Born March 4, 1867, Died April 26, 1949.

Adolph Roos, Born July 12, 1882 - Died July 23, 1882.

Silvain H. Asher, Born March 3, 1891, Died Oct. 18, 1898.

Philip L. Asher, Born in Jackson, Miss., Sept. 23, 1859, Died in New Orleans, La., July 20, 1911.

Cleona Weil, wife of Philip L. Asher, Dec. 28, 1865 - June 22, 1918.

Baby Asher - November 12, 1920.

Leon E. Goudchaux, Dec. 17, 1881 - Oct. 17, 1944.

Josephine Weil Goudchaux, Schirhofen Alsace France 1868-1938.

Jacke L. Goudchaux, 1869-1937.

Eugene W. Goudchaux, 1899-1929.

Felix Weill, Born in Schirhofen Alsace Lorraine, May 19, 1881, Died in Rosa, La., Sept. 29, 1899.

Lottie, daughter of David B. Davis and Della Goudchaux, born Sept. 8, 1901 - Died April 17, 1902.

Marion G., infant son of Marx M. and Bonnye G. Levy, born Sept. 17, 1900 - died Nov. 8, 1900.

Callie, daughter of Jake L. and Josephine Goudchaux - born Sept. 3, 1896 - died Mar. 25, 1898.

Callie, daughter of L. and L. Goudchaux, July 15, 1874 - July 14, 1893.

To The Memory of Lottie Eilert (consoil [?]) of Leopold Goudchaux, born Oct. 12, 1849 - died at Big Cane, La., Dec. 17, 1881.

Leopold Goudchaux, born in Brumath Alsace Aug. 29, 1844 - Mar. 24, 1920.

Rosa Benjamin, born Sept. 21, 1880 - died Oct. 31, 1880.

Israel Levy, born at Bonaicher, Alsace - died in Opelousas at 87.

Charles L. Benjamin, born in New Orleans Aug. 20, 1856 - died Sept. 13, 1884.

Dr. John A. Haas, Jan. 2, 1863 - Oct 2, 1922.

David Roos, 1835 - 1918.

Leonard Haas, Nov. 15, 1899 - Feb. 22, 1904.

Nathan Roos, son of David Roos and Elese Marks - Sept. 19, 1871-Aug. 14, 1900.

Elise Roos Haas, May 23, 1898 - July 5, 1898.

Elise, wife of Davis Roos, born Oct. 14, 1844 - died Nov. 3, 1887.

Benoit Levy, born in Surbourg, Alsace Mar. 26, 1873 - died Sept. 10, 1881.

Leonce Roos, born April 13, 1869 - died Aug. 20, 1875.

Isidore Liberman, beloved son of Linda Kreeger and Hyman Liberman, May 22, 1872 - June 8, 1876.

Juanita Phillips, infant daughter of Fanny Kreeger and Emanuel Phillips, April. 24, 1878, Sept. 23, 1878.

Children of Joseph Frankel and Emma Loeb -
1. Gustave Frankel Jan. 29, 1890 - July 10, 1890.
2. Esther Frankel May 15, 1888 - July 22, 1890.

Solomon Loeb, born at Gerdlsheim Rhein Pfalz, Bavaria, died in New Orleans June 25, 1893 aged 53 years, 6 months, 17 days.

Sarah Loeb, wife of Solomon Loeb, born at Ruhlheim, Germany, Mar. 15, 1841 - died Aug. 26, 1903.

Mary Firnberg, Dec. 10, 1858 - Dec. 10, 1909.

Robert Firnberg, Jan. 7, 1867 - Dec. 13, 1912.

Tillie Firnberg, Aug. 11, 1888 - aged 15 years.

Solomon Firnberg, died May 27, 1884, aged 52 years.

Joseph Kaufman, Sept. 14, 1844 - June 22, 1878.

Rita Munzsheimer, daughter of F. Munzsheimer and Sarah Loeb, Dec. 28, 1875, July 1, 1876.

Moses Munzsheimer, Feb. 27, 1872 - Aug. 25, 1872.

Pauline R. Isaac, Died April 2, 1933.

Ida Isaac, daughter of Solomon Isaac and Rosalie Block, born New Orleans, May 2, 1864 - died Sept. 22, 1870.

Oscar Bloch, son of Joseph and Bertha Bloch, Jan. 5, 1873 - Dec. 2, 1874.

Rosalie Block, wife of Solomon Isaac, born Nov. 8, 1841 - died Mar. 27, 1869.

Solomon Isaac, Mar. 6, 1829, June 9, 1898.

Isaac Roos, 1866-1928.

Eda Louise Roos, daughter of Isaac Roos, died 1928.

APPENDIX C

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN LOUISIANA*

Date	*Church*	*Location*
1828	Congregation Touro Synagogue	New Orleans
	Hebrew Rest Cemetery	New Orleans
1844	Hebrew Benevolent Association	New Orleans
1846	Cemetery Association Linfuzoth Jehudah (Dispersed of Judah)	New Orleans
1847	Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society of New Orleans	New Orleans
1850	Cemetery Shaarai Tefillah (Gates) of Prayer)	New Orleans
1852	Touro Infirmary	New Orleans
1853	Ladies Auxiliary of the Congregation Gates of Prayer	New Orleans
1854	Cemetery Gemiluth Chassodim (Unselfish Benevolence)	Pineville
	The Hebrew Foreign Mission of New Orleans	New Orleans
	Jewish Children's Home	New Orleans
1855	Touro Relief Society For Indigent Jews in Jerusalem, Palestine	New Orleans
	Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association	New Orleans
1856	Cemetery Chavi Sholom (Lovers of Peace)	Plaquemine
	Congregation Bikur Cholim (Visiting the Sick)	Donaldsonville
	Hebrew Benovelent Society of Plaquemine	Plaquemine

*Source: *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Louisiana; Jewish Congregations and Organizations* (Prepared by the Louisiana Historical Record Survey Division of Community Service Programs, Works Project Administration, 1941).

Date	*Church*	*Location*
1857	Congregation Temime Derech (The Right Way)	New Orleans
	Hebrew Benevolent Association	Shreveport
1858	Cemetery Association of Congregation B'Nai Israel (Children of Israel)	Baton Rouge
	Hebrew Rest Cemeteries	Shreveport
1859	Congregation B'Nai Israel (Children of Israel)	Monroe
	Congregation B'Nai Zion (Children of Zion)	Baton Rouge
	Congregation B'Nai Zion (Children of Zion	Shreveport
1860	Hebrew Bikur Cholim of the Parish of Ascension (Visiting the Sick)	Donaldsonville
1861	Cemetery B'Nai Israel (Children of Israel)	Monroe
	Congregation Gemiluth Chassodim (Unselfish Benevolence)	Alexandria
	Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Association	Shreveport
1863	Harmony Club	New Orleans
1864	Beth Israel (House of Israel)	New Orleans
1865	Israelite Ladies Charitable Association	New Orleans
	Hebrew Rest Cemetery	Opelousas
1866	Cemetery B'Nai Israel (Sons of Israel	Natchitoches
	Hebrew Education Society of New Orleans	New Orleans
	Hebrew Rest Cemeteries No. 1 and No. 2	New Orleans
1869	Cemetery Menachim Avelim (Comforting the Mourners)	Lafayette
1870	Congregation Temple Sinai	New Orleans
	Louisiana Lodge No. 107, B'Nai B'rith	Shreveport

Date	*Church*	*Location*
	Young Men's Hebrew Benevolent Association	Shreveport
1871	Congregation B'Nai Israel (Sons of Israel)	Natchitoches
1871	Congregation Chevre Anshe Tiphereth Israel (Society of Men for the Glory of Israel)	New Orleans
	Congregation Shaarey Zedek (Gates of Righteousness)	Morgan City
	Ladies Hebrew Association of Baton Rouge	Baton Rouge
1872	New Orleans Lodge No. 182, B'Nai B'rith	New Orleans
	Temple Sinai Cemeteries	New Orleans
1873	District Grand Lodge No. 7, B'Nai B'rith	New Orleans
1874	Children's Hebrew Benevolent Society	Baton Rouge
1875	Abraham Geiger Lodge No. 232, B'Nai B'rith	Baton Rouge
	Congregation Chevra Thilim (Society of the Psalms)	New Orleans
	Ladies' Aid and Sewing Society	New Orleans
1877	Congregation B'Nai Sholom (Children of Peace)	Bastrop
	Congregation of Chevra Mikve Israel (Hope of Israel)	New Orleans
	Congregation Temple Emanu'El (God With Us)	Opelousas
1878	B'Nai Sholom (Children of Peace)	Bastrop
	Congregation Chavi Sholom (Lovers of Peace)	Iberville
1879	Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association	New Orleans
1880	Zered Lodge No. 245, B'Nai B'rith	Opelousas
1881	First Agricultural Colony of Russian Israelites in America	Sicily Island

Date	*Church*	*Location*
1882	Adassah Lodge No. 208, B'Nai B'rith	Monroe
1883	Congregation Rodeph Cholom (Seekers of Peace)	Lafayette
1884	Congregation Agudath Achim (Society of Brothers)	Shreveport
	Rebecca Lodge No. 240, B'Nai B'rith	Alexandria
1885	Othniel Lodge No. 287, B' Nai B'rith	Natchitoches
1887	Congregation Ahavas Sholom (Love of Peace)	New Orleans
	Hebrew Relief Society of Shreveport	Shreveport
1890	Cemetery Ahavas Sholom (Love of Peace)	New Orleans
1891	Congregation She'Erith Israel (Remnant of Israel)	Lecompte
	Harmony Club	Shreveport
1892	Congregation Temple Sinai	St. Francisville
1894	Ladies' Rachael Benevolent Association	New Orleans
1895	Congregation Temple Sinai	Lake Charles
	Sisterhood of Touro Synagogue	New Orleans
	Somech Nophiim Association No. 1 (Uplifters of the Fallen)	New Orleans
1896	Congregation Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard (United Brothers of the Sephardic Rite)	New Orleans
1897	Cemetery Chevra Thilim (Society of the Psalms)	New Orleans
	Congregation Schangary Tefilotta (Gates of Prayer)	New Iberia
	Council of Jewish Women	New Orleans
	Council of Jewish Women	Shreveport
	Hebrew Mutual Aid Association	New Orleans
1898	Israelite Benevolent Association	Providence

Date	*Church*	*Location*
1899	Graceland Cemetery	Lake Charles
	Julius Weis Home for Aged and Infirm	New Orleans
	Lake Charles Hebrew Benevolent Association	Lake Charles
1900	Ascension Lodge No. 543, B'Nai B'rith	Donaldsonville
	Calcasieu Lodge No. 506, B'Nai B'rith	Lake Charles
	Feliciana Lodge, B'Nai B'rith	St. Francisville
	Plaquemine Jewish Ladies' Aid Society	Plaquemine
	Temple Sinai Sisterhood	New Orleans
1901	Cemetery Chessed Shel Emmeth (Society for the Dead)	Shreveport
1902	Provident Aid Society	New Orleans
1903	Congregation Beth Israel (House of Israel)	New Orleans
1904	Isidore Newman School	New Orleans
	Young Men's Hebrew Association	Monroe
1905	Congregation Agudath Achim School (Society of Brothers)	Shreveport
1907	Congregation Emanu'El (God With Us)	New Orleans
1909	Congregation Agudath Hakenhilloth (United Community)	New Orleans
1910	New Orleans Hebrew School	New Orleans
	New Orleans Zionist District	New Orleans
1913	Cemetery B'Nai Israel (Sons of Israel)	Alexandria
	Jewish Charitable and Educational Federation	New Orleans
	Temple B'Nai Israel Jewish Daily School (Sons of Israel)	Alexandria
1914	Congregation B'Nai Israel Sisterhood (Children of Israel)	Baton Rouge
	Daughters of Jacob Society	New Orleans

Date	*Church*	*Location*
1915	Chevra Thilim Ladies Auxiliary (Society of the Psalms)	New Orleans
	Jewish Library of New Orleans	New Orleans
1916	Communal Hebrew School	New Orleans
	Congregation of the Jewish Oriental Society	New Orleans
1917	Clinton Louisiana Hebrew Association	New Orleans
	New Orleans Hadassah (Queen Esther)	New Orleans
1919	Hebrew Fraternal Association	New Orleans
	The Hebrew Minyan of Newellton	Newellton
1920	Congregation Beth El (House of God)	Bogalusa
	Congregation Beth El Sisterhood (House of God)	Bogalusa
1920	North Louisiana Zionist District	Shreveport
1921	New Orleans Young Judean Council	New Orleans
1923	Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood (House of God)	New Orleans
	Jewish Burial Rites Association	New Orleans
1924	Congregation B'Nai Israel Sisterhood (Children of Israel)	Monroe
1925	Monarch Institute	New Orleans
	Organization Sisterhood of Congregation Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard (United Brothers of the Sephardic Rite)	New Orleans
1926	Mosean Fraternity	New Orleans
1927	New Orleans Junior Hadassah (Queen Esther)	New Orleans
	Touro Synagogue Brotherhood	New Orleans
1928	Congregation B'Nai Israel Brotherhood (Children of Israel)	Monroe
	Orthodox Jewish Center	New Orleans
1930	Hebrew Institute	Shreveport
1932	Jewish Welfare Fund	New Orleans

Date	*Church*	Locations
1936	Congregation Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Cemetery	New Orleans
	Congregation Beth Israel Men's Club (House of Israel)	New Orleans
	Maccabee Alumni Organization	New Orleans
	Temple Sinai Brotherhood	New Orleans
1937	Congregation Shaarai Tefillah Brotherhood (Gates of Prayer)	New Orleans
	Jewish Welfare Fund	New Orleans
1938	Chevra Thilim Men's Progressive Club (Society of the Psalms)	New Orleans
	Jewish Youth Organization	New Orleans
	United Jewish Charities of Northeast Louisiana	Monroe
1939	Central Council of Jewish Organization	New Orleans
1940	Brotherhood of Anshe Sfard Synagogue	New Orleans
1941	Jewish Burial Society of Congregations Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard and Chevra Thilim	New Orleans
No Date	Cemetery Bikur Cholim (Visiting the Sick)	Donaldsonville
	Congregation B'Nai Zion Hadassah Society	Shreveport
	Congregation B'Nai Zion Sisterhood (Children of Zion)	Shreveport

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